

# The Genus *Chamaecyparis*

## The Falsecypress

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**The genus is made up of 6 species of which five are hardy for Midwest landscapes.**

- Five are native to the Pacific Rim, *C. formosensis*, *obtusa* and *pisifera* are native to Asia while *C. nootkatensis* and *lawsoniana* are native to western North America.
- The Sixth species *C. thyoides* is native to the east coast of the U.S.

**Interestingly the Asian species *C. obtusa* and *pisifera* are most popular in the U.S. while *C. lawsoniana* is used extensively in Europe. All the species are extremely variable yielding a seemingly endless list of cultivars and forms.**

- In general, the species are pyramidal by nature and all but *C. thyoides* can exceed 100' in native stands.
- The largest will be at least 50% smaller under landscape conditions and can be maintained at suitable heights by proper pruning. Most cultivars do not even come close to the maximum size for the species
- Seldom do we encounter the pure species in landscapes, but rather we find many of the cultivars used for their diversity of form, color and texture.

### **Culture**

- Falsecypress does best in full sun to partial shade in rich, moist, well-drained acidic soil. They thrive in a cool, moist atmosphere where they are protected from drying winds.
- An eastern exposure can provide relief from the stress of a hot afternoon summer sun and the desiccating winds of winter.
- *C. thyoides* is the exception, found growing naturally in fresh water swamps and bogs, wet depressions, and along stream banks withstanding less than perfect drainage.

### **Landscape Use**

- There is a *Chamaecyparis* for almost any landscape application if the proper cultivar is chosen.
- They can be used for accent, hedges, screens, foundation and border plants as well as in rock gardens and as collector items.

# The Species

## **C. lawsoniana – Port Orford Cedar**

- Native range is Southwestern Oregon and Northern California.
- The wood is highly prized with large trees bringing as much as \$50,000.00.
- The Japanese especially appreciate the wood because it resembles their native *C. obtusa*.
- Originally seed was sent to England from the Coos Bay area of Oregon about 1854.
- Well over 200 cultivars available, mostly of European origin.

## **C. nootkatensis – Weeping Alaskan Falsecypress**

- Native to coastal Alaska, and the Cascades of Washington and Oregon.
- Increasing in popularity, there are at least 20 cultivars available.
- I have found the plant extremely adaptable to Midwest landscape and the plant thrives under field growing conditions in Ohio.

## **C. obtusa – Hinoki Falsecypress**

- Native range Japan and Taiwan (Formosa).
- The species is seldom grown, but is found in a wide selection of miniature, dwarf and slow growing forms.
- Quite adaptable to heat and humidity and resent dry, cold climates with desiccating winter winds, but are generally tolerant of drought.
- More adaptable to Zone 5b.

## **C. pisifera – Sawara Falsecypress**

- Native to Japan.
- An abundance of cultivars exist, few of which resemble the species.
- Green, blue, yellow and variegated forms exist, some with adult foliage, others with juvenile foliage and several with thread-like foliage.
- They are generally of easy culture preferring some moisture at the roots and more cold hardy than *C. obtusa*.

## **C. thyoides – Atlantic Whitecedar.**

- Native from Maine to Florida.
- Thrive on moist soils, but do not like heavy clay.
- Today, there are possibly up to 50 cultivars available. Some resemble the species while others have juvenile growth and compact forms.

## **C. formosensis – Formosan Falsecypress**

- Native to Taiwan (Formosa).
- Very similar to *C. obtusa*
- Zone 8 hardiness – not hardy for Midwest landscapes.

# Chamaecyparis for Midwest Gardens

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## **Chamaecyparis lawsoniana** 'Alumii' Lake Erie Blue Falsecypress

- |                      |                              |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| l. 'Dik's Weeping'   | Dik's Weeping Falsecypress   |
| l. 'Van Pelt's Blue' | Van Pelt's Blue Falsecypress |
| l. 'Blue Surprise'   | Blue Surprise Falsecypress   |
| l. 'Rijnhof'         | Rijnhof Falsecypress         |
| l. 'Sullivan'        | Sullivan Falsecypress        |

## **nootkatensis** 'Pendula'

- |                      |                                       |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| n. 'Pendula Glauca'  | Weeping Nootka Falsecypress           |
| n. 'Dense Form'      | Blue Weeping Nootka Falsecypress      |
| n. 'Green Arrow'     | Dense Form Nootka Falsecypress        |
| n. 'Strict Weeping'  | Green Arrow Nootka Falsecypress       |
| n. 'Glauca'          | Strict Weeping Nootka Falsecypress    |
| n. 'Compacta Glauca' | Blue Nootka Falsecypress              |
| n. 'Aurea Variegata' | Compact Blue Nootka Falsecypress      |
| n. 'Variegata'       | Golden Variegated Nootka Falsecypress |
|                      | Variegated Nootka Falsecypress        |

## **obtusa** 'Nana'

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|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| o. 'Nana Gracilis'     | Dwarf Hinoki Cypress             |
| o. 'Templehof'         | Dwarf Hinoki Falsecypress        |
| o. 'Repens'            | Templehof Hinoki Falsecypress    |
| o. 'Kosteri'           | Prostrate Hinoki Falsecypress    |
| o. 'Gracilis Compacta' | Koster Hinoki Falsecypress       |
| o. 'Gracilis'          | Compact Hinoki Falsecypress      |
| o. 'Aurea'             | Hinoki Falsecypress              |
| o. 'Meroke Twin'       | Golden Hinoki Falsecypress       |
| o. 'Divine's Gold'     | Meroke Twin Falsecypress         |
| o. 'Crippsii'          | Divine's Gold Falsecypress       |
| o. 'Verdonii'          | Cripps Hinoki Falsecypress       |
| o. 'Filicoides'        | Verdon Gold Falsecypress         |
| o. 'Fernspray Gold'    | Fernspray Falsecypress           |
| o. 'Gold Fern'         | Fernspray Gold Falsecypress      |
| o. 'Pygmaea Aurescens' | Gold Fern Falsecypress           |
| o. 'Sanderi'           | Dwarf Bronze Hinoki Falsecypress |
| o. 'Blue Feathers'     | Sander's Falsecypress            |
|                        | Blue Feathers Falsecypress       |

o. 'Saffron Spray'	Saffron Spray Falsecypress
o. 'Mariesii'	Maries Falsecypress
o. 'Snowkist'	Snowkist Falsecypress
o. 'Tonia'	Tonia Falsecypress
o. 'Spiralis'	Spiral Hinoki Falsecypress
o. 'Split Rock'	Split Rock Falsecypress
o. 'Torulosa'	Twisted Hinoki Falsecypress
o. 'Golden Whorl'	Golden Whorl Falsecypress
<b>pisifera</b> 'Boulevard'	Boulevard Falsecypress
p. 'Baby Blue'	Baby Blue Falsecypress
p. 'Curly Top'	Curly Top Falsecypress
p. 'Squarrosa Intermedia'	Blue Moss Falsecypress
p. 'Arnhem'	Arnhem Falsecypress
p. 'Compacta Variegata'	Dwarf Variegated Falsecypress
p. 'Golden Pincushion'	Golden Pincushion Falsecypress
p. 'Cream Ball'	Cream Ball Falsecypress
p. 'Snow'	Snow Falsecypress
p. 'Iceberg'	Iceberg Falsecypress
p. 'Plumosa Aurea'	Golden Plume Falsecypress
p. 'Plumosa Flavescens'	Dwarf Plume Falsecypress
p. 'Filifera'	Green Thread Falsecypress
p. 'Filifera Aureovariegata'	Variegated Thread Falsecypress
p. 'Mops'	Golden Mop Falsecypress
p. 'Vintage Gold'	Vintage Gold Falsecypress
<b>thyoides</b> 'Blue Sport'	Blue Sport Whitecedar
t. 'Hopkinton'	Hopkinton' Whitecedar
t. 'Aurea'	Gold Tip Whitecedar
t. 'Variegata'	Variegated Whitecedar
t. 'Andelyensis'	Andely Whitecedar
t. 'Little Jamie'	Little Jamie Whitecedar
t. 'Red Star'	Red Star Whitecedar
t. 'Shiva'	Shiva Whitecedar
t. 'Heatherbun'	Heatherbun Whitecedar