Native Plant of the Month

Western Red Cedar
*Thuja plicata*

- The common name describes its cinnamon-red colored bark and wood.
- Distinctive “J”-shaped boughs provide dry shelter for many wildlife species.
- Porcupines, squirrels, and ravens use strips of its soft bark to line their nests.
- Known as the “Tree of Life,” native people used its wood for housing, canoes and carvings; its soft inner bark for clothing, blankets, and baskets; its branches for rope, incense, and medicine; and its roots for basketry. To learn more, read Cedar by Hilary Stewart.

Landscape Value

This fragrant evergreen cedar is a graceful addition to the landscape. Western red cedar is slow growing, taking up to 100 years to mature. It is valued for its adaptability to a wide range of conditions; from sun to shade, wetlands to upland forests.

If planted closely together, red cedar can be used as a hedge or screen that can be groomed by pruning for height and width. Plant with vine maples, dogwoods, hazelnuts, and other small trees with an understory of ferns and woodland flowers for year round interest.