

Salix - Growing Guide

Introduction To Salix

Willow

Willow species come in very varying shapes and ultimate sizes. Some are dwarf rockery plants, some are taller growing shrubs, and some are trees.

Willows do, however, have a number of characteristics in common. They dislike shallow chalk soils and grow best in deep, moist soils which do not necessarily have to be beside streams and water but often are. Dwarf species need no pruning and nor do those species growing as weeping trees. Other shrubby varieties, which are primarily grown for their winter stem colours, can be regularly pollarded to encourage vigorous regrowth in much the same way as you would prune coloured stemmed dogwoods. Waterside growing weeping willows are often pollarded completely to a crown at 10-20ft to rejuvenate them and extend their lives, but this is clearly a job for a tree surgeon.

Taller growing willows propagate fairly easily from hardwood winter cuttings set in bare earth in a damp location and preferably in shade.

Dwarf Growing Willows For The Rockery Or Shrub Border

S. hastata 'Wehrhahnii' grows to around 3ft in height eventually as an upright shrub. Its key attribute is its conspicuous silvery-grey male catkins (3in long) which appear well before the leaves.



S. hastata 'Wehrhahnii'



Salix helvetica

Salix helvetica



Salix lanata



Salix lanata

S. cinerea, the grey willow, grows to 20ft or more and has stout pubescent twigs. The catkins appear on this native willow in profusion before the leaves in early spring.



Salix exigua

Salix exigua



Salix fargesii

Salix fargesii

Salix fargesii



Salix fargesii

S. moupinense is similar to *S. fargesii* but smaller growing with smaller leaf



Salix moupinense



Salix moupinense



S. moupinense & *fargesii*
similar but not the same!



Salix 'Sekka'



Salix 'Sekka'



Salix 'Golden Sunshine'



Salix 'Golden Sunshine'

S. babylonica 'Tortuosa', the tortured willow, is a fast-growing upright tree which has peculiar, twisted shoots and bright green twisted leaves. The catkins are yellow green. This is also a plant much sought after by flower arrangers and it often looks its best when leafless in winter. It will grow eventually to 40-50ft but can be pollarded if need be.



S. babylonica 'Tortuosa'



S. babylonica 'Tortuosa'



S. babylonica 'Tortuosa'



S. babylonica 'Tortuosa'



S. caprea 'Kilmarnock'



S. caprea 'Kilmarnock'



S. caprea 'Kilmarnock'



Salix daphnoides



Salix daphnoides



Salix daphnoides



Salix daphnoides



Salix 'Erythroflexuosa'

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