

# Featured Plant



*Cercis canadensis*. Photo credits: Rick Darke

## Redbuds

### Spring Grandeur from Around the World

Redbuds are one of our showiest native trees. Drive south on I-95 near the end of March or early April and you're sure to enjoy a colorful display of redbuds along the roadside. Although redbuds have been in the trade for decades, you do not see them frequently planted in gardens. What you see along roadsides doesn't begin to represent the variation possible in our native species. Redbuds offer incredible genetic diversity and in the past few years, breeders have introduced a number of exciting new cultivars of both the native redbud and Asian species for use in many different landscape sizes.

The native range of eastern redbud runs from New Jersey to Florida, west to Texas and into Mexico. This wide range has created variation to the point that some authors list three or four species of redbud native in the U.S., not counting the western U.S. redbud. Typically, these variants are treated as botanical varieties or subspecies. The selections native to Texas and Mexico have brilliantly glossy foliage. Several species native to the Middle East and Asia greatly add to the variability of the genus.

Redbuds are grown primarily for the deep colored flower buds and subsequent flowers. Flower color may range from white, to pale pink, deep pink and magenta but there is no true red flowered (or red budded) redbud. The mid- to late-April floral display in northern Delaware is a sight to behold. Bare branches are covered with tightly packed clusters of flowers, nearly obscuring the branches. Our native redbud and most Asian and Middle Eastern species can be considered either large shrubs or small trees, perfect for smaller residential landscapes. The one exception is the Chinese redbud, which is shrubbier. Most redbuds provide shade if limbed up or serve as a screen if low branches are kept. New in the trade are several dwarf and weeping cultivars which serve as accent plants in groupings or as specimens.

The fall foliage on redbuds is typically bright yellow, beckoning the last days of autumn before gracefully falling to the ground. A new selection called 'Hearts of Gold' displays golden or chartreuse foliage throughout the growing season. As the foliage falls, numerous seedpods drape the branches. Adaptable to bright sun or light shade and moist to dry soils, redbuds are fairly low-care plants. Redbuds do not do well in poorly drained soils.



| Latin Name   | Common Name    | Mature Size | Light | Soil | Pot Size, Plant Size | Price |
|--|----------------|-------------|-------|------|----------------------|-------|
| <b>**<i>Cercis canadensis</i> 'Ace of Hearts'</b> PP   | Eastern Redbud | 15'         | ○●☁   | ☁    | 7 g, 4-5'            | \$85  |
| If size is a limit in your garden, consider this new compact selection. Foliage and flowers are more densely held on the stems compared to the species. These attributes, combined with its compact nature and dense, dome-shaped habit, make it the perfect plant for the smaller garden.             |                |             |       |      |                      |       |
| <b>**<i>Cercis canadensis</i> 'Appalachian Red'</b>  | Eastern Redbud | 20-25'      | ○●☁   | ☁    | 15 g, 5-7'           | \$95  |
| Red — almost! Truly distinctive from other selections, this cultivar offers the deepest colored flower buds to date — a deep purple-red that opens to brilliant pink flowers. Size and habit are similar to the species.   |                |             |       |      |                      |       |
| <b>**<i>Cercis canadensis</i> 'Covey' Lavender Twist</b> ®   | Eastern Redbud | 4-8'        | ○●☁   | ☁    | 1 g, 1-2'            | \$25  |
| You have seen weeping willows and weeping cherries, now there is a weeping redbud. The distinctive habit enhances the garden in all four seasons. Plants are typically trained up to 2 to 3 ft., then allowed to weep. Numerous deep colored buds that open to rosy-pink flowers accentuate the habit. |                |             |       |      |                      |       |
| <b>**<i>Cercis canadensis</i> 'Forest Pansy'</b>   | Eastern Redbud | 20-30'      | ○●☁   | ☁    | 3 g, 3-5'            | \$45  |
| Not to downplay the rose-purple flowers but it is the foliage color that is the main attraction on this cultivar. Leaves emerge deep purplish red, and the glossy leaves shimmer in the sunlight. Plant in full sun as shade turns the foliage to nearly green.  |                |             |       |      |                      |       |
| <b>**<i>Cercis canadensis</i> 'Hearts of Gold'</b>   | Eastern Redbud | 15-25'      | ○●☁   | ☁    | 1 g, 2'              | \$35  |
| The heart-shaped foliage is brilliantly gold, fading to chartreuse — exquisite throughout the summer. Thankfully the purple-pink flowers appear before the gold foliage as the mix might be considered garish to some.   |                |             |       |      |                      |       |

# plant descriptions

Latin Name Common Name Mature Size Light Soil Pot Size, Plant Size Price

- \*\*Cercis canadensis 'Silver Cloud'**  
Eastern Redbud 15-25' ○●☁️ 3 g, 3-5' \$45  
Everything in moderation is the motto of this plant. Although variegated, the indiscriminate white splashes in the dark green leaves are display that contrast with the solid green of other plants in the summer garden. Flowers are rosy pink.
- \*\*Cercis canadensis subsp. texensis 'Traveller'**  
Texas Redbud 4-5' ○●☁️ 15 g, 2-3' \$165  
The glossy foliage emerges coppery red with a distinct wavy margin and leathery texture. The diminutive size and broad, weeping habit are reminiscent of a Japanese maple. Abundant, rose-purple flowers outline the branch architecture.
- Cercis chinensis 'Avondale'**  
Chinese Redbud 6-10' ○●☁️ 1 g, 2' \$25  
Stunning for the bare stems studded in deep, rich rose-purple flowers in the spring. 'Avondale' blooms before the leaves emerge. The flowers are so closely packed that the stems are barely visible in the spring. Shorter and shrubbier than our native redbud.
- Cercis chinensis 'Shirobana'**  
Chinese Redbud 6-10' ○●☁️ 1 g, 2' \$35  
A shrubby, compact plant with multiple stems, the Chinese redbud brightens the spring landscape with its abundant, pure white flowers heavily adorning the branches.
- Cercis gigantea** Giant Redbud 25-40' ○●☁️ 1 g, 2' \$35  
This species from China may be the largest of the redbuds. Plants show extraordinary vigor, growing 17 ft. in 6 years at the J. C. Raulston Arboretum in Raleigh, North Carolina. The leaves are large, 6 to 8 in. across, and the rose-pink flowers are a larger size but a lighter color than other species.
- Cercis griffithii** Afghanistan Redbud 15-25' ○●☁️ 1 g, 2' \$35  
Closely related to the Judas tree (*C. siliquastrum*) and as the name suggests, Afghanistan Redbud is native to the Middle East. Useful as a small tree under-planted with perennials. The pale, rosy-magenta flowers persist longer than our native species, and are present when the foliage emerges.
- Cercis occidentalis** Western Redbud 15-20' ○●☁️ 1 g, 2' \$35  
With a native range from Oregon south to Arizona, Western Redbud can be a shrubby plant 6 to 12 ft. tall to a small tree 20 ft. tall. Distinctive blue green color leaves and rich rosy-pink flowers are enhancing attributes. Literature varies as to hardiness: Plants we offer are from a northern source and plants of this species are growing in Raleigh, North Carolina.
- Cercis racemosa**  
Chain-flowered Redbud 15-25' ○●☁️ 1 g, 2' \$45  
Many references refer to this as the most attractive redbud. Flowers are borne on 2 to 4 in. long, dangling racemes, providing a spectacular spring display. The late J. C. Raulston described it as the "most beautiful redbud in existence," while John Frett is "amazed and enamored with the novelty of the flowers." Questions of hardiness exist; Dr. Frett weighs in as hardy to zone 6 while others rate hardy to zone 7.

Cercis canadensis. Photo credit: Rick Darke



Latin Name Common Name Mature Size Light Soil Pot Size, Plant Size Price

- TREES**
- Acer buergerianum** Trident Maple 20-35' ○●☁️ 3 g, 1-2' \$20  
The exquisite orange and red fall color, exfoliating, grey-brown-orange scaly bark for winter interest, and small tree habit make this a superb candidate for smaller residential gardens.
- Acer carpinifolium** Hornbeam Maple 20-25' ●●☁️ 3 g, 2-4' \$25 \$16  
● Known as the hornbeam maple for its atypical leaves, this is a smaller than usual species. Its bright green leaves open from tight pleats in spring and look like hornbeam leaves. Fall color is a rich gold and brown color. Vase shaped and multi-stemmed, hornbeam maple displays a round-headed canopy.
- Acer maximowiczianum** Nikko Maple 20-30' ○●☁️ 7 g, 7-8' \$45  
Related to the better-known paperbark maple, this slow-growing tree also has trifoliate leaves. Similar to all other plants in this group, the foliage becomes a rich combination of orange to bright red in the fall.
- Acer nipponicum** Nippon Maple 15-30' ○●☁️ 3 g, 5' \$45  
This rare maple has boldly textured foliage which turns yellow in the fall. The attractive flowers dangle in long racemes that provide a dramatic display in the spring. A striking plant with green stems.
- Acer palmatum 'Ao shime no uchi'**  
Japanese Maple 6-8' ○●☁️ 3 g, 2-4' \$35  
Slender leaves gracefully cascade over branches making it an ideal choice for a container tree or bonsai. Plant looks equally well planted in the garden. Leaves turn a lovely yellow-gold in the fall.
- Aesculus × carnea 'Fort McNair'**  
Red Horsechestnut 20-25' ○☁️ 7 g, 2-3' \$45  
Selected for its superior foliage and large clusters of pink flowers with yellow throats, this *Aesculus* hybrid has resistance to leaf scorch and blotch. Selected on the grounds of Ft. McNair, Washington, D.C.
- \*\*Aesculus pavia 'Humilis'** Red Buckeye 15-30' ○●☁️ 1 g, 2-3' \$20  
Native to the southeastern and southcentral U.S., this adaptable plant can be grown as a large shrub or small tree. The pure red flowers appear in late spring and contrast well against the deep green foliage. While the leaves do not have any significant fall color, they are free from disease.
- \*\*Aesculus × neglecta var. tomentosa**  
Hybrid Buckeye 40-60' ○●☁️ 7 g, 3-4' \$35  
A hybrid between *A. octandra* (our tall, native yellow buckeye with yellow flowers) and *A. sylvatica* (our native shrubby painted buckeye with yellow, pink or red flowers) resulted in a tall tree with flower petals light yellow with red veins at the base. This naturally-occurring hybrid flowers in mid- to late spring.

Trees



## Quick Reference for Cultural Symbols

In order to help you select the right plant for your gardening needs, we have included the following symbols to indicate plant needs:

### LIGHT RECOMMENDATIONS

- full sun   ● partial sun   ● full shade

### SOIL MOISTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

- ☁️ dry soil   ☁️ moist soil   ☁️ wet soil

These are broad guidelines, as plants often can withstand a wider range of conditions. Plants that prefer part shade may grow well in full sun if there is adequate soil moisture during hot, dry spells. Similarly, plants that prefer moist soils may grow well in drier sites if some shade is provided, especially midday.

### Nativity

\*\* [two asterisks] before the Latin name indicates plants are native to the Eastern United States. Cultivars of native plants are also considered native, as these are a selection from variants in the population.