

Lawson cypress *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*



Bedgebury's Lawson cypress collection.



Natural distribution of Lawson cypress

Lawson cypress



Leyland cypress



Lawson cypress foliage



Lawson and Leyland cypresses can be hard to tell apart. Lawson

cypress trees have a less column-like shape than Leyland cypresses. The ends of the Lawson cypress branches droop downwards more.

illustrations by John White

You may have this tree in your garden.

Lawson cypresses are hugely popular in horticulture. There are hundreds of varieties (known as 'cultivars') that have been specially grown to show certain shapes, sizes and colours.

The bank in front of you contains the NCCPG (National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens) National Collection of Lawson cypresses, a comprehensive 'living gene bank' containing most of the known cultivars. The collection protects rare cultivars from extinction and is a useful resource for gardeners and timber producers.

Lawson cypress produces one of the world's finest timbers. It is light and durable, and particularly prized in east Asia for flooring and fencing. Unfortunately this means that wild populations are now threatened because of logging. Just as severe is the threat from a root disease called Phytophthora.

Did you know?

The path behind you used to be the main drive to Bedgebury Manor House, lined on both sides with Lawson cypresses. We intend to replace any lost trees with new ones grown from wild-collected seed. This means we can conserve as much natural genetic variety as possible.