



Japanese Yew

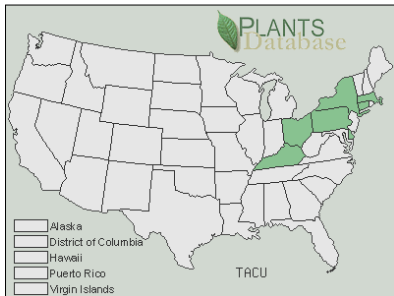
Taxus cuspidate Sieb. & Zucc.

Native Origin: Japan, eastern Asia

Description: Small tree or large shrub in the yew family (*Taxaceae*) growing to 25 feet in height. Growth varies from broad to narrow, spreading to upright, and flat-topped to pyramidal. It has many limbed boles and a short trunk. The bark is thin, reddish brown, and scaly, and the inner bark is reddish purple. Stems are light green in color, turning brown after several years. Buds are green with keeled scales (female flower buds are pointed and male buds are rounded). Evergreen needles are single, spirally arranged, flat, approximately 1 inch long, dark green and shiny above to pale green or yellow below with 12-15 rows of stomates. Male and female flowers are found on separate plants (dioecious). Male flowers are small, round, yellow and are borne on the undersides of the leaves; female flowers are solitary. The fruit is a naked ovoid seed 1/4 inch long, surrounded by a bright red, fleshy aril, maturing in late summer, persistent through fall.



Note: It resembles the native, Canada yew (*Taxus canadensis*), which occurs in the states highlighted on the map below, and European yew (*Taxus baccata*) which is cultivated and wide spread.



Habitat: It is located on acidic soils in cold humid habitats of elevations of 1,640 to 3,280 feet. It likes moist, well-drained soil, but not wet soils and can grow in sun or shaded habitats.

Distribution: This species is reported from states shaded on Plants Database map. It is reported invasive in NJ and VA by the National Park Service.

Ecological Impacts: Used as a popular landscape plant, it has escaped throughout much of New England and now appears in woodlots and young forests.

Toxicity: For some animals such as dogs, eating plant parts can cause breathing problems, trembling, weakness, heart problems, stomach upset, and sudden death.

Control and Management:

- **Manual-** Hand pull or use weed wrenches to remove small plants; cut larger trees and treat stumps with herbicides
- **Chemical-** It can be effectively controlled using any of several readily available general use herbicides such as glyphosate or triclopyr. Follow label and state requirements.
- **Biological control-** One natural enemy, an anamorphic botryosphaerid fungus (*Macrophoma taxi* Berl. & Vogling) attacks Japanese yew.

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