



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Plant Materials Program

Aberdeen Selection of Laurel Willow

Salix pentandra L.

A Conservation Plant Release by USDA NRCS Aberdeen Plant Materials Center, Aberdeen, Idaho



Aberdeen Selection of Laurel Willow used in a windbreak in southeastern Idaho.

Aberdeen Selection of Laurel Willow (*Salix pentandra* L.) is a pre-varietal germplasm released in 1998 by the USDA Aberdeen Plant Materials Center.

Description

Laurel willow is a medium sized tree with a dense round top, symmetrical crown and multiple trunks. This tree grows to heights of 20-40 feet with average canopy coverage of 15-25 feet. Laurel willow has lustrous dark green foliage. The dark green, shiny leaves are 2 to 5 inches long and very attractive. The bark on the fine twigs and the stems is green to yellow green and gray on the older trunks. It requires deep, moist soils or supplemental irrigation.

Source

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Plant Materials Center at Aberdeen, Idaho received the original plant material from the Plant Materials Center in Rose Lake, Michigan. It was collected in the upper Midwest from naturalized stands of European lineage. Laurel willow was introduced to the United States from Europe during the past three centuries.

The Aberdeen Selection of Laurel Willow was selected from a collection of potential windbreak plants assembled and evaluated at the Plant Materials Center from 1981 through 1996. Laurel willow has been tested at off-center locations near Mountain Home, Idaho and Winnemucca, Nevada. This accession was selected for its beauty, hardiness, appropriate growth form for windbreaks, and natural range of adaptability. This accession shows great promise for use throughout the Intermountain West,

northern Great Plains and upper Midwest when used in irrigated windbreaks and for landscaping.

Conservation Uses

The potential uses of Laurel willow are for wind erosion control, diversity and beautification. Its fibrous root system and wide canopy cover make it an excellent plant for soil stabilization. The moderately dense stem and leaf pattern makes this an excellent plant for windbreaks. It is recommended for use in interior rows of multiple-row windbreaks, in a single row or twin-row windbreaks where an evergreen is not needed or desired, for landscaping, and to provide nesting and roosting habitat for birds.

Area of Adaptation and Use

The range of adaptation is very broad because the plant is expected to be used under managed conditions where annual rainfall is high (at least 22 inches per year) or where irrigation water is available. It is tolerant of very cold weather and adapted for use in windbreaks and landscaping throughout the Intermountain West. It also should perform well in the northern Great Plains and upper Midwest.

Laurel willow prefers deep or moderately deep loams, sandy loams, gravelly loams, well-drained to somewhat poorly drained soils.

Establishment and Management for Conservation Plantings

This plant is most commonly reproduced and established using cuttings. Cuttings should be made during the period from late fall to early spring when the plants are dormant and have no leaves. Branches from 0.5 to 2 inches in diameter make excellent cuttings. All of the small side branches should be removed, as well as the upper part that is less than 0.25 inches in diameter. Cuttings can be from 3 to 6 feet long. Cuttings should be stored under refrigeration until spring, or they can be planted immediately. The key to successful planting is to get the bottom of the cutting as deep into the soil as possible. A good rule of thumb is to place at least 2/3 of the cutting in the ground and more if possible. Where irrigation water is provided, planting deep and watering deep are essential to long term survival. If the cuttings have been stored for a long period prior to planting, soaking the lower ends (all that will be in the ground) in water 1 to 4 days will speed up the rooting process. The use of root promoting hormones is not required. The scarring or cutting of the planted portion is not recommended and may hurt the plant.

No problems have been observed with insects or diseases which could affect the survival or appearance of this plant.

Ecological Considerations

Laurel willow is not intended for use in natural wetlands or riparian areas. Since it is an introduced plant from Europe, it is not an appropriate component in native plant communities. In riparian areas, stems cut by beaver and broken stems may spread this plant to areas beyond the landowner's control. The released material is all from female plants.

Seed and Plant Production

Nurseries may establish their own parent plants for long-term production of cuttings. Bare root and containerized plants may be easily established from cuttings following established commercial nursery practices.

Availability

For conservation use: The availability of cuttings is limited from commercial vendors.

For seed or plant increase: Parent plants are maintained at the Aberdeen Plant Materials Center. Cuttings from these plants are available to nurseries at no cost. Nurseries

may establish their own parent plants for long-term plant production.

For more information, contact:
Aberdeen Plant Materials Center
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Ph. 208-397-4133
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<http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/idpmc/>

Citation

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For additional information about this and other plants, please contact your local USDA Service Center, NRCS field office, or Conservation District <<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>>, and visit the PLANTS Web site <<http://plants.usda.gov/>> or the Plant Materials Program Web site <<http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/>>

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