

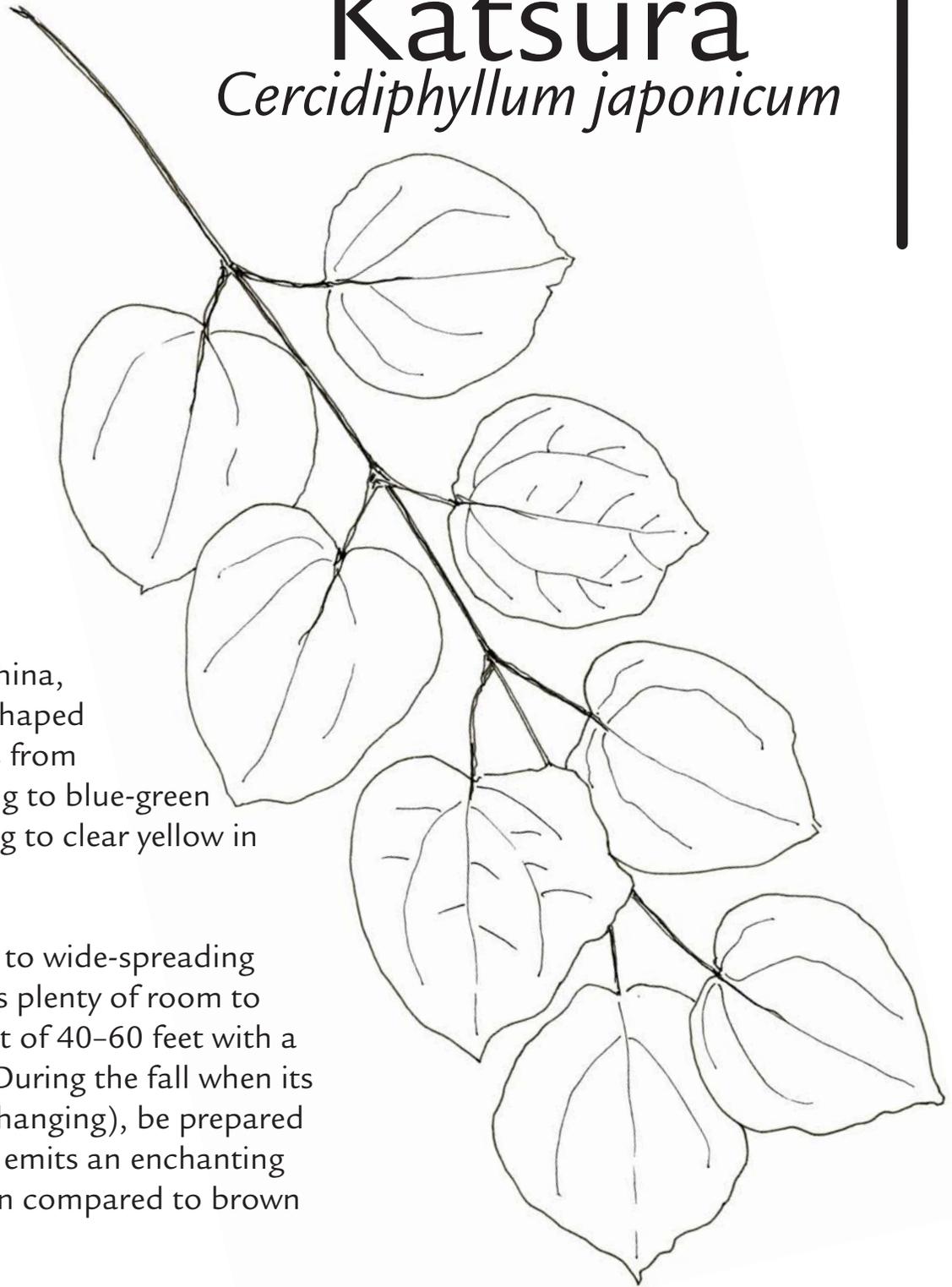
Katsura

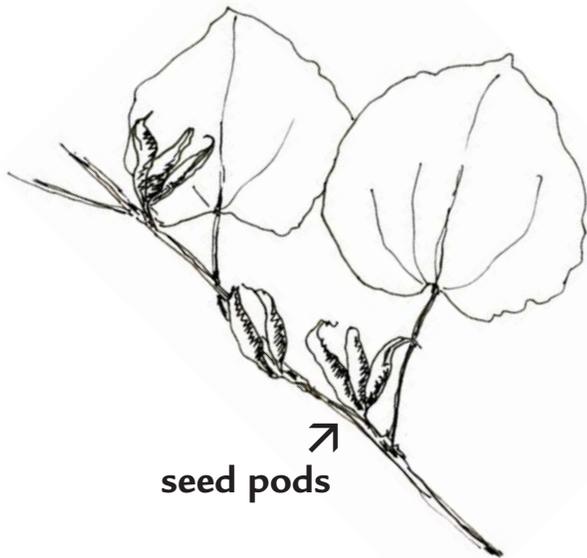
Cercidiphyllum japonicum

Native to Japan and China, this tree sports heart-shaped foliage that transitions from reddish-purple in spring to blue-green in summer, finally aging to clear yellow in autumn.

With its full pyramidal to wide-spreading shape, katsura requires plenty of room to grow, reaching a height of 40–60 feet with a spread of 20–30 feet. During the fall when its leaves are senescing (changing), be prepared for a treat—the foliage emits an enchanting fragrance that has been compared to brown sugar or cotton candy.

How does the tree emit that sweet scent? As the leaves reach the end of their life cycle, a naturally occurring compound known as malt sugar is in peak production. Malt sugar, or maltose, is commonly used as a flavor enhancer in baked goods and other foods.





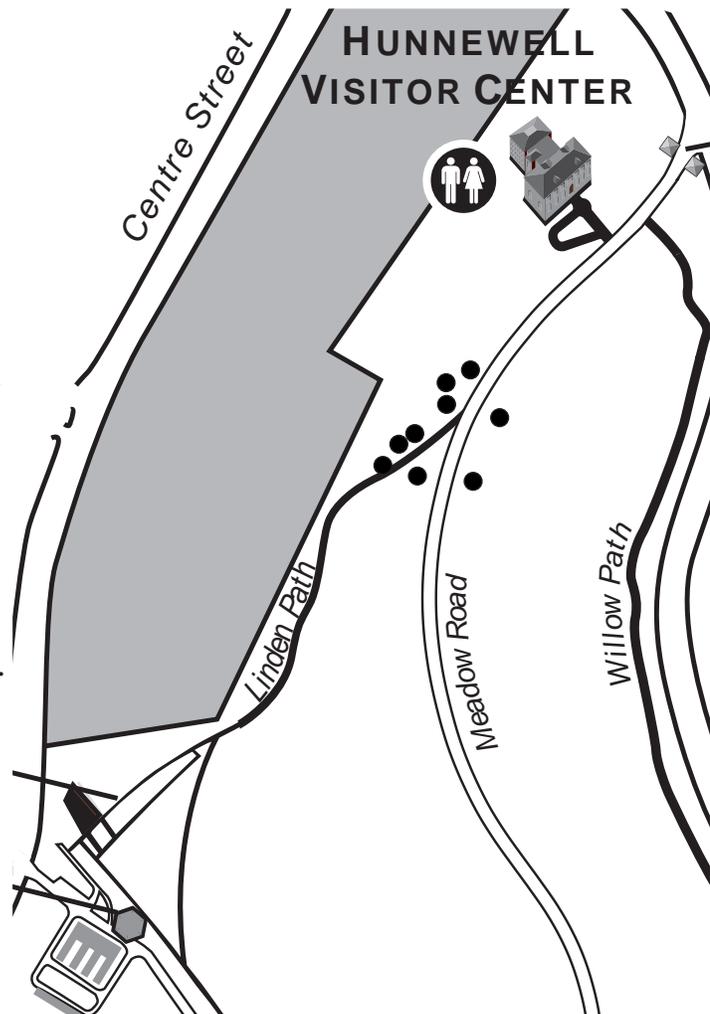
Tree Gender

Katsura is a **dioecious** plant, meaning the male and female flowers are produced on separate trees. The spring flowers are not showy but they create a haze of red (on female) or yellow (on male) around the leafless branches. Fertilized female flowers turn into pods that resemble miniature clumps of bananas. They split open in the fall releasing small winged seeds.

Explore the katsura trees of the Arboretum

Although single specimens can really catch the eye, katsura truly dazzles when planted in groves. The heart of the Arboretum's *Cercidiphyllum* collection lies along Meadow Road, near its juncture with Linden Path, marked by the black dots on the map.

The Arboretum's specimens are 30 to 50 feet tall, but in their native forests in Japan and China, they can achieve a height of 100 feet and a girth greater than any other deciduous tree. In Japan, katsura is commonly used as timber. In this country, it is valued for its distinctive heart-shaped leaves, spreading habit, and that wonderful fragrance in autumn.



The **ARNOLD**
ARBORETUM
of HARVARD UNIVERSITY

125 Arborway
Boston, MA 02130-3500
617-384-5209

www.arboretum.harvard.edu