



Redbud

(commonly called Judas tree)

Cercis canadensis L.

Location: It grows throughout NC; it is most abundant in the Piedmont and least abundant in the mountains. It grows beneath taller trees. It grows on the borders of fields, on hillsides and in the valleys of NC.

Bark: The bark is dark gray to black and smooth when the tree is young but develops into long, narrow plates that separate into thin scales as the tree ages.

Leaves: The leaves alternate along the stem, are heart-shaped and about 3 to 5 inches long and wide. They are glossy green and turn a bright clear yellow in autumn.

Flowers: The flowers grow in clusters along the small branches and appear in early spring. They are bright purplish-red and pea-shaped.

Fruit: The fruit is 2 to 4 inches long and is in an oblong, flattened, many-seeded pod. It is red in color during the summer and usually stays on the tree most of the winter.

Wood Type: Hardwood. It is heavy and hard and is rich, dark brown in color.

Mature Height: 15 to 30 feet

Mature Diameter: 6 to 10 inches

Uses: It has little commercial value and is cultivated as an ornamental tree. Native Americans used the bark and roots for medicinal purposes to cure whooping cough and several other ailments. The flowers are edible.

Reference: Holmes, J. S., & Holmes, J. S. (2015). *Common forest trees of North Carolina: A pocket manual*. Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Forest Service.