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Chamaecyparis pisifera (Sawara False Cypress) ID #1150

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Sawara False Cypress

*Chamaecyparis pisifera*

ID #1150
Summary of the Sawara False Cypress

Throughout the Spring 2019 semester, students in BIO-140 Humans and their Environment Lab chose a tree on the Salve campus to observe. I chose a Sawara False Cypress (ID #1150), that is located in front of Wakehurst on the gravel path near the gate on the corner of Ochre Court and Leroy Avenue. I chose this tree because it was the brightest looking tree within a group of about ten other trees. I found the Sawara False Cypress in February, and because it is an evergreen, it still had a lot of color compared to its neighbors as they are all deciduous. When I first found this tree, I had no idea what it was, but through the "Salve Regina University Tree Inventory and Management Plan 2012" and multiple arboretum databases, I was able to gather a great amount of useful information about the Sawara False Cypress.

The Sawara False Cypress is a False Cypress species that is native to southern and central Japan. False Cypresses are evergreen conifers made up of roughly 8 species of trees that are used for ornamental purposes (Plant Family- False Cypress, 2019). In Japan, the most common use for the Sawara False Cypress is timber to build palaces, temples, and coffins. In the United States, the tree is most commonly found in gardens and parks where the climate is temperate (Chamaecyparis pisifera, 2019). The Sawara False Cypress is usually grown in wide, open areas of commercial or residential landscapes. The tree needs partial sun exposure and moist soil in regions with medium humidity and does not do well in extremely warm climates (Chamaecyparis pisifera- Sawata Falsecypress, 1993). Luckily, the location of my Sawara False Cypress is perfect, because it is protected from full sun exposure by neighboring trees and is located in a very temperate climate.

The Sawara False Cypress is a slow growing evergreen that usually stands anywhere from 25 to 120 feet tall (8 to 37 meters). My tree stands about 20 meters tall with a 75 cm
diameter at breast height, and a crown radius of 25 meters. The Sawara False Cypress has very smooth, reddish-brown peeling bark and green foliage, making it stand out in any season. The only time the Sawara False Cypress changes is in the winter when patches of foliage may appear brown (Chamaecyparis pisifera- Sawata Falsecypress, 1993). This change is most evident in observation 1 and observation 3, where the sunlight really highlights the foliage discoloration. Besides the occasional brown patches, the only other changes I saw were light moss growth on the base of the trunk and the wetness of the tree after periodic rain showers. The tree also contains small pea-like cones and long pointed scale-like leaves that appear to be a dark green to yellowish color (Chamaecyparis pisifera, 2019). The Sawara False Cypress is sometimes threatened by alkaline soil and exposure to Phomopsis blight in which branch tips turn brown and spread until the whole tree is dead (Chamaecyparis pisifera- Sawata Falsecypress, 1993).

During the course of this project, I learned a great deal of information while observing my Sawara False Cypress. Although my tree had very minimal changes, I was able to gather and retain very useful data through online Arboretum databases, such as Salve’s tree identification booklet and UConn’s Arboretum page. The "Salve Regina University Tree Inventory and Management Plan 2012" is an extremely useful source for identifying any tree on Salve’s campus, as it provides basic information, such as the age of the tree and its current condition. This writeup is offered through the Salve database as a pdf compatible with mobile devices which made my tree hunt a little easier. On the following pages, I have listed my 8 observations and photos of the Sawara False Cypress from February to May 2019.
SAWARA FALSE CYPRESS
Chamaecyparis pisifera
ID #1150

Location:
Located in front of Wakehurst, near the gate on the corner of Ochre Point and Leroy Avenue

Height (m):
20.0 m

DBH (cm):
75.0 cm

Radius of Crown (m):
25 m

Condition:
Good

Age Class:
Mature

Dates of Observation:
February- May 2019

Observation 1
Date: Late February
Narrative:
This photo was taken on a sunny February day where my tree can be seen standing taller than its neighboring trees.

Observation 2
Date: Early March
Narrative:
It was a cold and rainy day in early March for my second observation. No changes have been reported for my tree.
Observation 3  
Date: Mid-March  
Narrative:  
My third observation recorded slight discoloration to the tree’s foliage.

Observation 4  
Date: Late March  
Narrative:  
Observation 4 shows increasingly visible moss on the base of the trunk, which could possibly be due to early morning rain showers.

Observation 5  
Date: Early April  
Narrative:  
No changes for observation 5.

Observation 6  
Date: Mid-April  
Narrative:  
The neighboring trees were in bloom on this rainy April morning, but my tree has stayed the same.
Observation 7
Date: Late April
Narrative:
My tree is still healthy and alive as of late April.

Observation 8
Date: Early May
Narrative:
My final observation was taken on May 2\textsuperscript{nd}, in which my tree, along with its neighbors, were covered in bright green leaves after morning showers.
References


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