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Chamaecyparis pisifera (Sawara Falsecypress) ID #992

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Recommended Citation

Moen, Garrett, "Chamaecyparis pisifera (Sawara Falsecypress) ID #992" (2020). *BIO 140 Arboretum Project*. 13.

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Sawara Falsecypress, Tree ID 992

Chamaecyparis Pisifera

Garrett Moen

BIO 140 Lab, Spring 2020

This tree first caught my eye when I was walking back from the library early this fall when I was returning to my dorm with a new ukulele that had just arrived. It stood out to me because the bark of the tree reminded me of the trees I'd seen in my adventures out west in California and New Mexico, but the foliage of the tree reminded me of the trees that I see up near my cabin on the north shore of lake superior.

Chamaecyparis Pisifera, also known as the Sawara False Cypress Normally grows to a height of 35-50 meters high, with trunk diameter ranging from .5 m to 2 meters. They are characterized by long fissured strips of plated bark that has a mixture of red, brown and gray hues. The leaves are very thin and scale like, with the structure of needles but not the prickyness. On the end of each leaf is the cone, easily mistaken as part of the leaf, but is easily removed.

This particular tree is slightly shorter than the average mature Falsecypress, only being about 30 meters tall as opposed to the average 35- 50 meter height. It is also a bit thinner than most of its species, having a diameter of only only about .381 meters based on my measurements, but the official arboretum records have recorded it to be .4318 meters in diameter, this difference in measurements is probably due to my above average height and using my breast height.

The Sawara Falsecypress is native to the islands of Honshu and Kyushu in the southern parts of Japan but grows in temperate areas around the globe. It has seen particular popularity

across Europe and North America as well as southern Africa and parts of Oceania. It is related to the Formosan Falsecypress found in Japan and likely descended from *Chamaecyparis Eureka*, which was known to grow on Axel Heiberg Island in Canada.

The common use of the Sawara Falsecypress in its native Japan was lumber specifically for ceremonial structures such as temples, shrines, palaces, and coffins. This is due to the wood's pleasant scent and resistance to rotting. In other parts of the world it has taken a more aesthetic purpose, being relatively easy to take care of and slow growing, it makes for a nice decoration for yards and gardens. Because they grow so slowly, they can easily be dwarfed and the growth can be kept controlled. Juvenile trees are sometimes preferred because of their size and bright yellow color being very aesthetically pleasing.

Tree 992 serves this purpose on campus, being a nice spot for shade, with a wonderful view of Gerety and McAuley from its location. 992 has an asset value of \$5,780.52, which is no inconsiderable amount for one tree.

Through my observations throughout the semester, I noticed very few changes to the tree, this is likely due to the evergreen leaves of the tree not falling off in cold weather. It could possibly be my bad memory but it also seemed as if the tree got brighter red as the weather warmed but again, this might be my poor memory.

I'll be certain to revisit my tree in the years to come, and it will likely be here long after I have left Salve as it appears to be in great health for the time being. Though I realize it may be overlooked by students due to its small size, I'll always know that it is there and will be special to me.