



Northern redbud - *Cercis canadensis*

Description: Eastern redbud is a native, perennial, deciduous tree or shrub. The plants may vary in form from dense and round (to 6 m tall) when grown in sun, to an open, taller form (to 12 m tall) when grown in the shade. The trees produce hundreds of small pink pea flowers in the very early spring, even before other trees have leafed out. The bright magenta-pink to lilac flowers, appear in small clusters, primarily on older stems.



Leaf: Alternate, simple, cordate in shape, 3 to 5 inches long and wide, with an entire margin, thin and papery, petioles conspicuously swollen on both ends; green above and slightly paler below.

Flower: Very showy, pea-like, pink to light purple in color, 1/2 inch long, appearing in clusters all along even older stems in early spring before the leaves.

Fruit: Flattened, dry legumes, brown, 2 to 4 inches long that contain flat, elliptical, brown seeds 1/4 inch long, maturing in late summer.

Twig: Slender and zigzag, nearly black in color, spotted with lighter lenticels, leaf buds are tiny and dark red to chestnut in color; flowers buds are round and often numerous in large clusters on older woody stems.

Bark: Initially smooth and brown; later ridged and furrowed to scaly and dark gray; may have some maroon patches evident and orange in the cracks.

Form: A large shrub or small tree up to 30 feet with a short, often twisted trunk and spreading branches.

Site requirements:

Eastern redbud occurs in the forest understory in moist rich woods, along the banks of streams, in ravines, on bluffs, in open rocky woods, and abandoned farmlands. The plants do well in soils of moderate to low fertility and are very drought resistant. The seeds have very hard seed coats that require both chilling and scarification for germination, unless planted in the fall.

Native Range: Zone 4-8

AL, AR, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, IL, IN, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, NC, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, SC, TN, TX, VA, VT, WI, WV

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