

## Chapter 13

# Cultivars of *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*

CHRISTOPHE NUGUE

National Collection C CVS of *Metasequoia*, 15 Avenue Jacques Chastellain, Apt. 176, Rouen, France, 76100

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**Abstract:** A comprehensive list of cultivars of *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* Hu *et* Cheng is provided together with a brief description of the features that make each cultivar distinct from the type specimen. Included is a list of putative varieties and species that require further study.

**Key words:** color; cultivar; horticulture; hybrid; Netherlands; varieties.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Numerous cultivated varieties (i.e., cultivars) of *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* Hu *et* Cheng have been identified since its discovery over a half century ago. The botanical variety differs from the cultivated variety, which is not a nomenclatural taxon, but simply a variant or hybrid that possesses some economic or aesthetic value. The cultivar is often used in horticulture, landscaping or urban forestry because of the uniformity they display in characters such as foliage color, branch angle or overall growth form. The phenotypic

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uniformity of cultivars results from asexual propagation practiced by commercial nurseries (e.g., rooted cuttings, grafting or other cloning methods). Because cultivars are maintained by human cultivation they normally would not occur widely without man's influence. The following is a list of horticultural variants of *M. glyptostroboides*. Some of these varieties are commercially propagated whereas others are limited to much smaller scale propagation.

## 2. *METASEQUOIA GLYPTOSTROBOIDES* VARIETIES

**'Bonsai'** (Kuser *et al.*, 1997; J. Kuser, personal communication, 2001): This tree is a dwarf weeping cultivar with some bluish-green leaves. This tree grew approximately 50 cm in height and 65 cm in width over 4 years. John Kuser of Rutgers University and A. Bonville of Rutgers University selected this variant among the seedlings that were planted at the Ryder's Lane Plantation at Rutgers University in 1992. The seedlots were obtained from 47 new parent trees from Hubei, Hunan and Sichuan Provinces, China. The original tree is growing at the Morris Arboretum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

**'Emerald Feathers'** (Callen, 1976; Dirr, 1998): A vigorous clone with dense brilliant green feathery foliage. This tree is growing at the Hillier Arboretum, England.

**'Golden Dawn'**: A cultivar discovered by Kenneth W. Murray. A natural mutant from seeds of the species, sown in 1986. The original tree is cultivated in Wilmington, Del., USA. 1,5 m high in ten years with 1,2 m spread. The main characteristics are its globose shape, slow growing and golden yellow leaves. Needs partial shade the afternoon. This cultivated variety is mentioned in the US Patent & Trademark Office Website.

**'Gold Rush'** (Royal Horticultural Society Plant Finder [RHSPF], 2004): This recent cultivar comes from Japan and possesses yellow foliage. It is recognized under different names such as 'Golden Oji', 'Golden Mantle' and 'Ogon'. It roots well, but dry soil conditions sometimes cause the leaves to burn. This tree was introduced in Europe by P. Zwijnenburg Nurseries, Boskoop, The Netherlands in 1993 and commercialized in 1997-1998. Its growth was 6 m over 10 years. It comes from irradiated seedlot by X-ray (in 1974). The original tree was planted in 1977 at the Kameyama breeding station, Institute for forest Tree Improvement, New Oji paper co., Ltd, Mie, Japan. This cultivar is mentioned in the US Patent & Trademark Office Website.

**'Green Mantle'** (RHSPF, 2004): There is no description for this tree that is referenced in the Royal Horticultural Society plant finder. The name was