

## **A Horticultural tour of the Halifax Public Gardens Weeping Tree Area** **Audio Tour Transcript**

Welcome to the Weeping Tree Area tour which explores the founding of the Halifax Public Gardens and discusses the unique features of the trees that inhabit what is now the Northeast corner of the Public Gardens.

This tour uses enhanced verbal descriptions and detailed directions guiding you from one location to the next to create a more accessible experience. If desired, you can obtain a map of the tour route at the visitor information desk inside Horticultural Hall or download from the “audio tours” on the HalifaxPublicGardens.ca website.

Our tour begins just inside the gate located at the corner of Sackville Street and South Park Street. If you haven't made it there yet simply pause the audio on your mobile device and resume playback when you've reached this entrance.

**The history of the Weeping Tree Area of the Public Gardens** (for reference only. Titles in blue not stated in audio)

You are now standing at the entrance to the oldest part of the Halifax Public Gardens. A public garden was founded here in 1867, the same year that Canada became a nation.

The initial public garden was established on a two-acre plot on commons lands variously described as “a waste ground” and “a dismal swamp”. To this day, gardeners digging in this section of the Public Gardens oftentimes uncover discarded artifacts from the mid-1800's, betraying its past use by settlers as a dumping ground.

The landscaping design for the garden was based on a small Parisian public garden sketched by Halifax alderman and talented silversmith Thomas McCulloch while he was attending the 1866 Paris Exhibition to receive an award for his jewellery.

Upon returning to Halifax McCulloch, who by good fortune happened to be the head of the Halifax Commons Committee, instructed a gardener to create a similar style garden on this land. Within a year this grim plot of land was in-filled with rubble and other substrate, levelled, and transformed into a small garden with flowerbeds, trees and gravel paths.

Shockingly, after a replacement of the Commons Committee, the decision was made to uproot the budding garden and replace it with a hay crop. Following public outrage and the reaction of the press, the garden was replanted in 1870.

A new Commons Committee, headed by William Barron, oversaw the revival of the small public garden, choosing the Gardenesque design style popular during Victoria times over its former Parisian design. Barron and others even donated plants from their own private gardens, and around this time two Newfoundland seals were donated and lived in the artificially created Griffin's Pond, just to the west of the Public Gardens.

In 1874, the Halifax Public Gardens expanded by absorbing the much larger Nova Scotia Horticultural Society Gardens, a *private* garden founded in the 1830's which was accessible only with a membership. That acquisition and the purchase of additional land created the beautiful, freely accessible, 16-acres Halifax Public Gardens we enjoy today.

As Barron managed the expansion of the Public Gardens, he hired Irishman Richard Power as superintendent in 1872, a person with gardening knowledge and technical ability who had worked as a gardener and foreman on the grounds of Lismore Castle in Ireland and Central Park. Power directed the growth of the Public Gardens, implementing a unifying Gardenesque landscape design over the entire 16-acre site. Those design elements are still visible today.

The ornate red brick building across Sackville Street from where you are standing, known as Power House, was for many years the lodging provided to the superintendents of the Public Gardens. Completed in 1903, Richard Power and his family were the first occupants. Power, superintendent for more than 40 years, was later followed in this same role by two of his sons. Together the Power family served as superintendents of The Gardens for over 70 years.

Now that you know the history of this area of the Gardens, let's admire some of the plants that give it its unique character.

**Just through the gate at the corner of Sackville and South Park Street, and looking into the Gardens, you will find three pathways branching out. Head 13 meters to the beginning of the leftmost path, where you will find a signpost with a map of the Gardens on your right. A few meters beyond the signpost on the same side of the path, there is a very tall tree—at the base of the tree there is a label “tulip tree”. Pause the audio now until you locate the tree.**

### **The towering tulip tree, scientific name *Liriodendron tulipifera***

The tulip tree is a tall, fast-growing tree, with large, four-lobed leaves, and somewhat shaggy greyish-brown bark. It is a “deciduous” tree, meaning the tree sheds its leaves annually. Despite its common name “tulip tree” and sometimes “tulip poplar”, it is neither related to tulip flowers nor to poplar trees. The tulip tree is actually a member of the magnolia family of flowering trees.

In bloom from April through to June, the tree has beautiful yellow-green cupped flowers shaped like tulips, but these can be hard to see as the branches of the tulip tree typically begin quite far up the trunk of this towering tree. Occasionally visitors are confused by presence of mysterious yellow-green flower petals scattered over the surrounding ground with no apparent source.

The tulip tree can grow up to and exceed 36 metres or 120 feet in height. Under ideal conditions, it can live around 150-300 years. The tulip tree’s natural range is eastern North America, mainly within the United States but extends into southwest Ontario. The wood has been used to make furniture and instruments, and the large, straight trunk is ideal for creating dugout canoes.

**From the signpost with the map of the Gardens, continue straight along the leftmost path for 25 metres, until you reach the first intersection on the right. As you walk, notice the decorative wrought iron perimeter fence that was installed around the Public Gardens in 1907, replacing an older wooden fence. Decorative ironwork such as this was a very popular feature adorning Victorian Gardens. When you reach the first intersection there is a bench across the path if you would like to sit as we discuss several features in this area.**

### **A natural wall of lindens and elms separates the Gardens from the city**

Many people stroll and admire the tall linden and elm trees lining the shady path you just came down. Elm trees are known for their imposing height, and often have many forks in their trunks and branches, making them resemble a lightning strike. Linden trees are equally tall as the elm, with a larger and fuller canopy, and pale, cream-white blossoms that let off a sweet scent in early summer.

If you look further down the path, you will find that they are planted the length of the perimeter on this side of the Gardens and indeed, continue along the entire perimeter, separating the Gardens from the urban landscape and bustle of downtown Halifax.

This natural wall of lindens and elms, in combination with the iron fence that encloses the Gardens supports the Gardenesque design notion that gardening was an artistic pursuit, and that a garden should be enclosed as if it was a gallery showcasing works of art.

As a contrast to the crowded border trees, note how many trees further within the Gardens are widely spaced. Gardenesque design sought to optimize the view of individual trees within The Gardens, accentuating their unique details, and treating the trees as if they were sculptures.

The border trees were first planted in 1872, one of the priorities of Superintendent Power's efforts to unify the Gardens and introduce Gardenesque design features. The saplings came from the newly defunct Horticultural Society's nursery. Although the tree border of the Public Gardens is mostly composed of American elms and European lindens, Chinese and wych elms, and various other large trees can also be found.

Many of these trees have grown immensely tall, and have not only withstood the test of time, but also many destructive hurricanes and storms. Unfortunately, a large swath of the original border trees planted along Summer Street on the west side of Public Gardens succumbed to the winds of Hurricane Juan in September of 2003.

### **The cool-coloured perennial bed**

From this spot, just off the right-hand side of the path you can also see the **first** of the **three** colour-themed perennial beds in the Weeping Tree Area of The Gardens - the **cool-coloured bed**, made up of blues, greens and purples.

The Victorians loved bright, high-contrast garden beds, and colour-themed beds were a unique feature. Victorian gardens favoured visual presentation over the natural order of plants and their optimal growing conditions. The juxtaposition of similarly coloured plants with different light and water needs is an example of the coveted gardenesque notion of control over nature. Extensive maintenance is required to achieve this goal and is a reason why so few Victorian Gardens remain today.

Here you can also see the distinctive Victorian gardening technique of raised beds used to elevate and showcase the plantings. Typically, interior plants are taller than plants along the edges, so all specimens are visible.

During the Victorian Era there was unprecedented access to various plant species due to expansion of the British empire. The combination of introduction of new technology

such as the greenhouse to assist with transport and storage of plants, and the lawn mower to help with trimming and edging, allowed for many unique types of plantings and intricate bed shapes.

Some of the plantings in the bed before you include hydrangea, monkshood, larkspur, lavender, blue globe thistle and sea holly. The cool bed also hosts beautiful irises that bloom in spring, and false indigo, which produces pea-like pods in the late summer.

**From this first intersection, continue straight on the same path another 10 metres until you reach a second intersection to the right, just past the cool-coloured bed. Take the right fork of the intersection heading away from South Park Street towards the lamp post 12 meters ahead until you reach another intersection.**

**As you walk a little information about the decorative, cast-iron lamp posts. There are 38 electric light standards in the Halifax Public Gardens, of which 32 were originally introduced as gas lights in the last quarter of the 1800's. The Victorian idea of lighting the public spaces added the new experience of revealing the public garden at night.**

**At the intersection, about 3 meters your left you will find what looks like a very large, dark-green bush with waxy leaves - and if you're there when it's in bloom in early summer, a large, pink mass of flowers. Pause the audio now until you reach the rhododendrons.**

### **One of the Ironclad rhododendrons of the Public Gardens**

Rhododendrons were brought from India to Britain in portable greenhouses, often referred to as Wardian cases or terrariums, and then cultivated to grow in the English climate. In the early 20th century, some of those rhododendrons were sent to Canada and the eastern United States and these rhododendrons were hybridized to introduce cold resistance.

Before you are "Ironclad" rhododendrons, a group of resilient, cold-hardy rhododendron hybrids that can survive very cold North American winters. These hybrids were developed by the Arnold Arboretum in Boston, with more than 14 "Ironclad" hybrids of varying colours.

The Ironclads were eventually put out of popularity by the "Dexter" group of hybrids, which were much easier to grow, and now Ironclads are somewhat rare. Most, if not all

the varieties of rhododendron displayed throughout the Halifax Public Gardens are Ironclads.

Many rhododendrons were brought to Nova Scotia, where they thrive due to the acidic soil. They were commonly used by the Victorians as an ornamental plant and were prized for their beautiful and plentiful early-summer blooms.

The word rhododendron translates to “red tree” or more specifically “rose tree”, likely in reference to its showy blooms. There are four species of rhododendron native to Canada, and all of them are found in Newfoundland and Labrador. Largely, rhododendrons are native to Asia, being believed to have originated from the Himalayas, where around 600 varieties grow. The rhododendron holds special significance wherever it grows, being honoured as the official flower or tree of several states and provinces in the United States, China and India and is the national flower of Nepal.

**If you have wandered to admire the rhododendrons, return to the intersection beside the lamp post.**

**Take the pathway to the right of the lamp post heading towards the fountain. Stop after 8 metres as you reach the bench on the left-hand side, just where the path starts to open into a bigger gravel space. To your left between two benches there is a straight-trunked tree with a gnarled, mushroom-like top.**

**A ring of Camperdown elms, scientific name *Ulmus glabra* ‘Camperdownii’**

This is one of five Camperdown elms that are somewhat evenly spaced encircling the fountain. If you are interested in searching for other Camperdown elms there is another in The Gardens tucked away amongst other trees and shrubs just southwest of the Horticultural Hall and there are also a great number of Camperdown elms planted in the historic Camp Hill Cemetery, just across Summer Street from the Public Gardens.

This umbrella-like tree has long, twisting limbs that forms a canopy that grows from the crown of the tree towards the ground. It is a cultivar, a plant variety that has been created through some means of selective breeding - in this case *grafting*. Grafting is a technique where living tissue called the cambium just under the exterior layer of a plant is joined between the two plants, so they can exchange nutrients and water and continue living as one.

The origin of the Camperdown elm is an interesting one. The standard wych elm is indigenous to most of Europe. A mutated version of this type of elm was found in a forest just outside the grounds of Camperdown Estate in Dundee, Scotland by the estate's forester David Taylor in 1835.

Unlike a regular wych elm, which is quite tall, this mutation was extremely low to the ground, with its branches sprawling out along the forest floor. The exact mutation it possesses is called negative geotropism, which in simple terms means "not knowing which way is up". The young tree was lifted and replanted within the grounds of Camperdown House, where it remains today.

The head gardener of Camperdown House produced the first example of what is known as a "Camperdown elm" by grafting a cutting of the mutated wych elm with the sprawling trait atop the trunk of a standard wych elm.

All Camperdown elms have been produced via this grafting method since the tree cannot be reproduced by seed. The grafting scar is typically easily visible on a Camperdown elm, identifiable by a slight bulge and slightly different bark texture on either side of the graft.

Camperdown elms were hugely popular in the curiosity-passionate Victorian era. This unique tree makes a great addition to any landscape looking good both in winter and summer due to its "head of furiously twisting branches". Many specimens were planted in places such as university campuses, government buildings, both public and private gardens or landscapes and cemeteries - often planted as a memorial tree.

Due to its popularity during the Victorian era, most examples still living around the world today are at least 100 years old, with the original Camperdown elm in Scotland being at least 186 years old. Since Camperdown elms are created through grafting two individual parts of trees together, all Camperdown Elms have both a "trunk age" and a "canopy age"

**Now move ahead 5 metres until you are underneath the canopy of the large weeping tree. In-between two benches, at the base of the tree trunk there is the label "weeping European beech". Pause the audio now until you are underneath the dome-like canopy of the tree.**

## **The massive weeping European beech, scientific name *Fagus sylvatica* 'Pendula'**

The European beech has several interesting cultivars created through grafting, most notably the copper and purple beeches you can find elsewhere in these Gardens and the beautiful weeping European beech - the ultimate shade tree.

The original weeping European beech cultivar was created in 1836 by the prolific Scottish horticulturist, writer, and landscape designer John Loudon, famous for coining the term Gardenesque. He grafted the 'weeping' mutation' of a beech tree found on the grounds of an English park onto a standard European beech.

This tree can take on two distinct forms - one form is a somewhat straight and then drooping "fountain spurt" form that resembles an arc. The other form, found at this stop, has a large, broad umbrella-shaped profile, with a mass of twisting branches that will grow to touch the ground, making the trunk of the tree only visible from within the enveloping canopy.

A slow-growing tree, the weeping European beech will reach 15 to 18 metres or 50-60 feet tall under good conditions, with a sometimes even wider spread. Its twisting branches typically grow upwards, then horizontal and then finally sweep downwards, creating a beautiful cascading effect. The tree also has an extremely dense canopy of dark green leaves that turn copper-coloured in the fall.

This tree is most likely somewhere within the range of 130-160 years old. Its grandiose form is an iconic sight to visitors of the Public Gardens, and it has grown alongside multiple generations of Haligonians. On its bark you can see many initials and names carved, as well as the bulging ring around the middle of the trunk; it's grafting scar, still visible after all these years. Known for its acoustics beneath the canopy, it is a popular place to sing, or play an instrument. Since its foliage blocks out the noise of the city, others opt to read a book, or simply relax instead. Its branches are a haven for many birds, and visitors have even reported seeing a barred owl sleeping in the tangled crown of the tree.

**Stepping back onto the path from under the canopy of the weeping European beech, walk clockwise around the circular path that rings the fountain for 10 metres until you reach a small weeping tree on the left-hand side of the path. There is a taller weeping tree immediately to its right.**



## Two old weeping European ash and a young replacement, scientific name *Fraxinus excelsior* 'Pendula'

These are weeping European *ashes*, a cultivar of the standard European ash. Four weeping European ashes were planted around the central fountain in the original design of the Gardens, but only two of the original trees remain. Years ago, one of the remaining two ashes was scheduled to be cut down as it became increasingly frail with age, but the arborist refused to cut the beautiful old tree down and instead compromised by trimming it back and it still stands tall today. Knowing that the weeping ashes are reaching the end of their lives, the gardening staff planted a replacement weeping ash and that is the smaller tree you see before you. It grows slowly as it stands in the shade of the older tree it will eventually replace.

The standard European ash is a large, deciduous tree with characteristic compound leaves, native to Europe and Asia Minor. The original mutated ash tree was discovered in a field in Cambridgeshire, England. Like the Camperdown elm, the original mutation was a rather short, stunted specimen, and it had to be grafted atop a regular European ash trunk so that the branches are elevated and able to hang down and show off the weeping trait it possesses.

The weeping European Ash takes on a tall, asymmetrical, somewhat parasol-shaped form, with weeping branches. The slow-growing tree will grow 3-8 metres or 10-25 feet tall, and take 25-30 years to reach maturity, rarely ever living past 250 years.

It was a popular landscaping tree in the Victorian Era. Like many other weeping trees, it is typically planted as a solitary individual in parks, landscapes, gardens, and cemeteries so its unique form can be easily viewed.

**Before moving on to the next stop, a few comments about the fountain you are circling. Around the time of the founding of the Public Gardens, a ceramic fountain was donated by Oswald Hornsby of the Elmsdale Pottery Works of Nova Scotia to anchor the Weeping Tree Area. Not much is known about this fountain except for a vintage photograph you can view on the right-hand side of the path as you continue to circle the fountain. The original ceramic fountain was replaced by this ornate cast iron fountain, called the Soldiers' Memorial Fountain, in 1903.**

**Although difficult to recognize while you are wandering the Weeping Tree Area, this centrally located fountain is part of a subtle symmetric pattern. The fountain, the cool-coloured perennial bed we previously visited, and another perennial bed we will visit soon create a symmetric east/west axis, with meandering pathways leading radially away from the fountain. This**

**type of subtly expressed symmetric patterns underlies the design of Victorian Gardens.**

**Continue clockwise around the circular pathway from the pair of weeping European ash trees until you pass a total of three pathways on your left, travelling about 45 metres, and stop at the fourth pathway you reach. Move 10 metres down this fourth path and on the left side of the path just past a lamp post, you will find a mid-sized tree with distinctly fan-shaped leaves.**

### **The resilient Ginkgo tree, scientific name *Ginkgo biloba***

This Ginkgo tree is one of two in the Public Gardens. The Ginkgo biloba is an ancient deciduous tree native to mainland China. It has distinctive, fan-shaped leaves that turn golden-yellow in the fall. Considered a “living fossil”, the Ginkgo Tree is linked to a family of primitive trees that were commonly found 160 million years ago, coming from an era pre-dating the evolution of flowering plants. The term living fossil refers to the fact that the Ginkgo has not notably changed for millions of years.

Interestingly its common name, maidenhair tree, comes from its leaf’s resemblance to the maidenhair fern.

The Ginkgo tree can grow to be 15 – 24 meters or 50-80 feet tall. It is both slow-growing and long-living - living as long as 3000 years.

The Ginkgo tree that you see before you is a male tree. Male Ginkgo trees are always preferred in landscaping, especially in any urban area since female trees grow cherry tomato-sized “Ginkgo fruit”. It is not really a fruit but a “seed ball”. This seed ball is problematic because it is particularly malodorous. As it rots, not only does it emit a strongly unappealing smell, it also oozes a slimy residue that can be a slipping hazard.

The Ginkgo is a very popular city tree due to its extreme resilience. It is very common in Tokyo as well as Seoul, and it is also becoming increasingly common in Halifax. It is resistant to pollution, disease, and pests, is very salt tolerant and it adapts well to limited space for its roots. You could even say they are resistant to time - being one of the “oldest” trees still in existence. Amazingly, in 1945, several Ginkgo trees within a short radius of the blast survived the Hiroshima atomic attack during World War II.

**From the Ginkgo tree, head 10 meters back to the circular pathway you just came from. Once there, head counter-clockwise along the circular pathway for about 12 metres, and take the first pathway on the right. From there you**

**will be heading straight towards the shore of Griffin's Pond, passing a large, white-coloured flower bed to the left of the path as you do so. Let's take a moment to pause and discuss this flower bed.**

### **The moonlight perennial bed**

Here we have the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the 3 perennial beds in the Weeping Tree Area, the white bed, or the moonlight bed. A moonlight bed is, as the name suggests, specifically designed to be enjoyed at night, preferably under the light of a full moon, when it is at its peak.

Several gardening techniques are used to enhance the night-time viewing experience:

- for visual stimulation, highly reflective white or off-white plants, as well as plants that have reflective foliage are featured,
- strongly scented plants are also an element of the moonlight garden, taking advantage of the heightening of the senses that occurs at night,
- and a moonlight garden can create further interest using plants that attract night-time pollinators such as moths.

Some of the possible flowers to be used in a moonlight garden include cosmos, daisies, zinnias, foxglove, dahlias, and lamb's ear. In the bed before you some favourite plantings of visitors include the white hydrangeas, lilies and echinacea - and sage, a treat for visiting bees.

The moonlight garden was a favourite theme of the Victorian Era, and during the 1800's interest around moonlight gardens increased, particularly amongst members of high society who grew them at their homes.

**From here, continue 25 meters straight ahead, passing alongside the moonlight bed until you intersect the path that runs along the shore of Griffin's Pond.**

### **The golden weeping willow on the island in Griffin's Pond, scientific name *Salix x Sepulcralis chrysocoma*; a hybrid of two willows**

Prominent on the small island in Griffin's Pond, the beautiful weeping golden willow's long, tendrilous branches can be seen gracefully shifting in the breeze. It is unfortunate that due to its water-locked position it cannot be properly admired up-close by visitors, but for this very reason it is an undisturbed perch for many birds that visit the Gardens.

Goldfinches and other small birds can be seen flitting about its branches, and kingfishers use it as a post to survey the pond before dive-bombing the water for fish. And although great blue herons don't perch up in the branches of the willow, they are also a favourite visitor of the pond, and can be seen fishing, or taking a rest on the shore of the island.

The golden weeping willow is a hybrid of two willow species, both indigenous to Europe. The first record of its creation was in 1888. One parent plant, the white willow, provides this hybrid with its frost hardiness and pale shoots. Its other parent, the weeping willow, contributes its strong graceful drape of branches or its weeping quality. This contrasts with the other weeping tree varieties on this tour, all of which have all achieved their weeping quality through grafting.

The long-living and pollution-tolerant golden weeping willow is the hardiest of the weeping willows. The “golden” descriptor comes from its golden young branches as well as its autumn leaf colour.

It is fast growing and can reach up to 15 metres or 50 feet in both height and spread, needing lots of space both above and below ground. Willow trees are notorious for having a highly aggressive root system that can be catastrophic for underground piping of any sort, as the roots can spread three times as far as it's canopy. On the plus side, the excessive root system can be very helpful in combating erosion along streams and other waterways. Willows have a high tolerance for wet soil and are often found near water - they can even withstand partial submersion.

Willow trees have played a role in medicinal practises throughout history. The bark is used by indigenous people in North America to make tea, and the young twigs are chewed to cure headaches thanks to the same active ingredient that is the basis of modern aspirin. The medicinal ingredient willow trees contain is salicylic acid, the name of which is derived from the genus “Salix”, meaning willow.

**On this path along the shoreline, follow it south, moving in the direction away from the perimeter fence and Sackville Street. Continue about 10 meters to the first intersection, just past a bench. If you are unsure, there is also a tree dedicated to “William Murray” on your left. At this intersection, on the shoreline to your right there is a tree with very feathery looking needles and a tapering, reddish trunk labelled “dawn redwood”.**

## **The living fossil - dawn redwood, scientific name *Metasequoia glyptostroboides***

The dawn redwood is a conifer or “cone-bearing” tree. Most coniferous trees are evergreen, but the dawn redwood is part of a very small group of conifer trees that have the deciduous trait of losing their leaves over the winter months.

Though it is the smallest of the redwoods, the dawn redwood is very fast-growing, growing at a rate of about half a metre or 24 inches annually and reaching a height of 18 metres or 60 feet or more. It will live at least 100 years under good conditions, with some protected specimens believed to be 400 years old. The dawn redwood has bright-green, feathery, scale-like “leaves” that bear more of a resemblance to needles. These needles take on an orange or red colouration and drop off in the fall.

An ancient tree species, the dawn redwood co-existed alongside the dinosaurs. Like the Ginkgo biloba, the dawn redwood is referred to as a “living fossil” as it has remained mostly unchanged for 65 million years. It was once one of the most widespread trees in the Northern Hemisphere at a time when northern climates were more temperate than they are today. An interesting hypothesis suggests that the deciduous trait of losing its needles resulted from the lack of light during the long winters of the extreme northern latitudes rather than as a response to cold as is the case with deciduous trees.

Long thought to have been extinct for millions of years, the dawn redwoods’ rediscovery in the 1940’s in a remote valley in south-central China was quite a surprise.

At the time of its scientific rediscovery, the Second World War put research efforts on hold until 1947, when seeds were able to be collected and widely distributed. Dawn redwoods are now planted in cities and landscapes across the world, including Halifax.

**From the dawn redwood, continue south down the path along the shore of the pond around 35 metres until you reach another intersection on your left, just after a series of benches. Take the left path which will move you generally back in the direction of the fountain and weeping beech. Follow the path completely for ~20 meters until you reach another fork. Stop there, and on your right, you will find a weeping tree with heart-shaped leaves and long, thin branches labelled “weeping katsura tree”. The label may be hidden under its branches.**

## **The weeping katsura tree, scientific name *Cercidiphyllum Japonica* 'Pendula'**

Native to east Asia, the weeping katsura tree is a graceful tree with cascading, weeping branches that hang in a pyramidal shape early in life, and later take on more of a rounded shape. The tree features heart-shaped leaves that are burgundy in the spring, blue-green in the summer, and apricot coloured in the fall - during which time they give off a scent comparable to caramel or cotton candy.

The weeping katsura can reach 8 meters or 25 feet tall, and it will survive at least 60 years or more under good conditions. It thrives in acidic soil, such as that common to Nova Scotia as well as Japan.

Like many other weeping trees, the weeping katsura is created through grafting. Branches with the weeping trait are grafted onto a straight trunk at around 5 feet tall. The Weeping Katsura can also be grown through "layered" propagation, a method where the branches are allowed to reach the ground or are guided into pots. If they are let to touch acceptable soil for long enough, they will eventually take root and grow into a clone of the original tree. The new sapling must be left attached to the parent tree for a time before being severed to become its own tree, as it will continue to draw nutrients from it.

In addition to the weeping katsura you see before you, there is another younger weeping katsura within the Jubilee Fountain Area of the Public Gardens. There are also three standard, non-weeping katsura trees planted within the Gardens - two in the Jubilee Fountain Area, and another near the garden beds showcasing fruits and vegetables.

**Finally, take a moment to look east across the path from the weeping katsura tree to a large bed of red and other warmly-coloured flowers.**

## **The warm-coloured perennial bed**

Before you now is the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final colour-themed perennial bed of the Weeping Tree Area - the warm-coloured bed, composed of yellows, oranges, reds, and warm purples.

Within the bed you may find Grecian and tea roses, globe flower, sunflower, scarlet bee balm, butterfly weed, yellow allium and Japanese burnet. The warm bed also has amber jubilee ninebark shrubs that were planted in commemoration of a royal jubilee event in the Gardens. This is a colourful, multi-stemmed shrub that boasts yellow-orange-red foliage in spring which turn lime-green in the summer and purple in the fall.

If you would like to learn more about the coloured-themed beds and other perennial beds of the Halifax Public Gardens, a catalogue of the plantings and bloom times can be accessed at the visitor information desk located within the Horticultural Hall.

**From this fork with the weeping katsura tree and warm-coloured bed, turn to face the fountain and weeping European beech, and take a moment to admire the beautiful flowing vista of the Weeping Tree Area of the Halifax Public Gardens.**

*[Four-second pause]*

Thank you for taking this audio tour of the Weeping Tree Area, which was produced by The Friends of the Public Gardens. We hope you've enjoyed learning about the horticulture of this historic garden which is in K'jipuktuk- the Mi'kmaw word for Great Harbour, in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. Originally a large, forested area with sprawling freshwater wetlands, the area from downtown Halifax to Point Pleasant Park was a sacred gathering place for the Mi'kmaq.