

Bald Cypress and Montezuma Cypress (*Taxodium distichum* and *mucronatum*)

Native Range: Hill Country Streams, Rio Grande River and Deep South Texas; East Texas to Florida

Sun/Shade: Full sun or part-shade

General Information: Bald Cypress is the majestic large tree, up to 160 feet tall, of Hill Country rivers and creeks. Montezuma is native along the Rio Grande River and other parts of Deep South Texas. The foliage of both looks the same, the major difference being that Bald Cypress grows more upright and pyramidal whereas Montezuma tends to grow foliage all over its trunk which gives it more of a weeping effect. Both trees are beautiful in their own way and grow well in our area.

Landscape Use: Use as you would any large shade tree, as long as you have a sprinkler system, water occasionally, or have an aerobic septic system. If everyone who has a sprinkler system or aerobic septic system would plant a Bald or Montezuma Cypress, our area would be dotted with these majestic trees. In areas with numerous aerobic septic systems, we could have a well spaced forest of Cypress. Homeowner Associations should consider encouraging or requiring residents to plant a Bald Cypress which would beautify their neighborhoods and help replace native plants destroyed by soggy soil created by aerobic system sprayed areas.

Size: Up to 160 feet tall and about 30 feet wide.

Type: Deciduous shade tree with rust colored fall foliage. Montezuma tends to be more evergreen

Drought Tolerance: Surprisingly drought tolerant, but will suffer, or perhaps die, in severe drought conditions, without supplemental irrigation. However, will survive drought as long as it is watered well at least once every 30 days when rainfall stops. Will grow larger and lush with more water. Develops knees or trunk knobs in areas with standing water.

Soil: Prefers lower areas with deeper soil but does just fine in the rocky Hill Country, as long as it gets water.

Water: Smart Watering Principle=Water well when first planted then allow to dry slightly, without wilting, then water deeply again, etc. Following this general watering principle is enough water for a Bald Cypress to look healthy. However, unlike many other native trees, you may water Bald Cypress as much as you like. If planting by a stream or pond, plant close to the water line but not in the water.