

Description

Native to China, the weeping willow tree (*Salix babylonica*) is easily identified by its weeping, pendulous branches that sweep the ground and its rounded form. A deciduous tree, the weeping willow grows to 50 feet in height with a 20- to 40-foot spread and does best within U.S. Department of Agriculture plant hardiness zones 6 through 8, although some nurseries claim a broader range – 4 through 9.

Germination

The seeds of many trees have a dormancy period that must be broken before they will germinate. Weeping willow tree seeds have no dormancy period and do not require any special pregermination treatment. In fact, in nature, weeping willow seeds germinate within 12 to 24 hours if they fall to moist soil. To germinate in the home or greenhouse, sow the seed immediately after collection into a moist media, such as sand or a mixture of peat moss and sand. Keep the medium slightly moist during germination.

Seed Care

When the weeping willow tree seeds sprout, keep the seedlings in a lightly shaded area and continue to keep the germination medium slightly moist. When the seedling reaches 6 inches in height, transplant it into a 1-gallon container filled with commercial potting soil and increase the amount of sunlight it receives, gradually, until it is in full sun. The ideal time to plant it outside is in early spring, after the danger of frost has passed. Weeping willow trees grow quickly – 8 to 10 feet per year – once they are planted in the landscape.