

## **Pussy Willow**

*(Salix discolor)*

The inch-long, soft, silky, fuzzy, gray catkins that appear in very early spring are the main attraction of this large shrub or small tree. The catkins are often cut and forced for early bouquets. Colorful bright yellow stamens appear only on male plants. Pussy willows break open at the end of their cycle, spreading seed around the garden. The plant can grow to 20 feet tall. New branches are red-brown, so frequent pruning produces more of these instead of the mature gray branches. The pussy willow is fast growing and can become unsightly if not kept in bounds.

**Soil:** Poor, moist soil is best

**Light:** Sun or shade

**Zone:** 3

### **Comments**

A smaller, more attractive pussy willow is Rose Gold (*S. gracilistyla*). Catkins are rose and gold toned, but the plant is less hardy.