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Podocarpus macrophyllus

[Synonyms : *Podocarpus appressus*, *Podocarpus chinensis*, *Podocarpus forrestii*, *Podocarpus longifolius*, *Taxus macrophylla*]

BUDDHIST PINE is an evergreen shrub or tree. Native to southern China and to Japan it has needle-like leaves and tiny, creamy-coloured male and small, fused-scaled, yellowish-green female flowers.

It is also known as Big leaf podocarp. *Inu-maki* (Japanese), Japanese yew, *Kusamaki* (Japanese), Longleaf podocarpus, *Maki* (Japanese), Southern yew, Sweet yew plum pine, Yew pine, Yew plum pine, and Yew podocarpus.

The flowers are pollinated by the wind.

Macrophyllus is made up of Greek *macro-* (large, long) and *phyllo-* (leaf) components meaning 'large-leaved'.

The Japanese have used some forms of Buddhist pine for hedging.

It is said to have been introduced to North America in 1804.

Buddhist pine has been cultivated in North America as an ornamental pot plant and as hedging.

Topiarists visiting the American Walt Disney World will no doubt have appreciated the craft behind the many topiarian characters there – some even grown out of mosses.

Elliott, Pete's dragon, has been carefully shaped out of Buddhist pine through a period of ten years. It is said to be the largest at over ten feet tall and measuring fourteen feet from head to tail.

Medicinally, the bark has been used locally for treating blood disorders and worms – and a fruit decoction has provided a tonic.