

OCTOBER 2013

# CATALPA



*Catalpas have distinct large heart shaped leaves. Spectacular large, trumpet-shaped white flowers with darker spots with an orchid-like resemblance appear in panicles in early summer! They turn into long bean-like pod persistent into winter, hence the common name of Indian Bean Tree or "Indian Cigar".*

*Catalpa bignonioides* (Southern Catalpa) occurs naturally in the swamps and wetlands of southern North America. It is said to have been spread by the early settlers who used its wood, brittle, but rot-resistant, for fence posts and railroad ties. The native name is Catawba and the Catawba worm (larva of the Hawk moth - not a problem in Canada) is highly desired as fish bait by fisherman in the southern USA. Catalpas are fast growers and are known for their tolerance of poor soils and urban pollution. They become drought tolerant with time. Ideal in park settings as they provide lots of shade and flower and pod drop are not a concern. They are also valued for soil stabilization purposes.

Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons



**Catalpa bignonioides 'Aurea' (Golden Southern Catalpa)** Zone 5 - Large ovate bright yellow leaves. New growth has large bold foliage. Open branching habit. 6M/20' tall by 4.5M/15' wide. Pictured at left.

**Catalpa bignonioides 'Nana' (Dwarf Southern Catalpa)** Zone 5 - A grafted dwarf form of Catalpa with a broadly rounded, dense head. Does not flower as profusely as other varieties. Top grafted at 2M/6'. Head size: 2M/6'tall by 3M/10' wide in 10 years. Pictured at right.



**Catalpa x erubescens 'Purpurea' (Purple Indian Bean Tree)** Zone 5 Large heart shaped leaves emerge red-purple and age to violet purple then dark green. White orchid like flowers with tinges of pink in early summer. Upright oval habit, excellent tree for pollarding. 9M/30' tall by 6M/20' wide. Pictured at left.

[www.specimentrees.com](http://www.specimentrees.com)