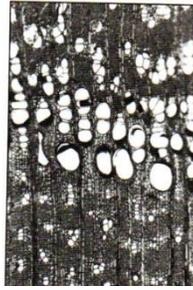


Wood of The Month



Eastern Redbud – *Cercis canadensis*

Eastern redbud (*Cercis Canadensis*) cannot be generally acquired commercially because of the size and nature of the tree, but when obtained it can be an interesting wood to turn. It can provide a unique color and grain pattern to, usually smaller, turned items. The redbud tree is a small tree with irregular growth structures which do not yield limb sizes large enough and with a trunk size of only 6 to 12 inches in diameter to create lumber. Therefore, the turner must harvest it where he can. It can be found in many yards, parks and areas where it is used as an ornamental. It is one of the first trees to bloom in the spring time at about the same time as the dogwoods. The blooms are a reddish purple or with a lavender cast. And speaking of the blooms, they are edible and can be used in salads either fresh or pickled or even fried. Bark of redbud has been used as an astringent in the treatment of dysentery.

The wood of redbud is moderately hard, polishes well but will split when nailed. The sapwood is a creamy white and the heartwood is a greenish to yellowish-brown which turns to a rich orange-brown after contact with sunlight. I know from experience that it turns well similar to ash resulting in interesting grain patterns when oriented properly. It will take detail pretty well and can be carved. It glues well and takes a good finish of any kind.

Other names of redbud are; June bud, American redbud and Judas-tree. The name Judas-tree name comes from a similar Asian variety that legend says that was the tree Judas hanged himself from.

There isn't very much published or on the internet about redbud as a woodworking wood but here is one link to [redbud](#).

Written by – Mel Bryan