

Kago-No-Ki
Actinodaphne lancifolia
Laurel Family - *Lauraceae*



*Called 'deer calf tree' (Kago-No-Ki)
because of the texture of its bark*

Every time I am in the Fern Dell, I walk by a small evergreen tree called Kago-No-Ki (*Actinodaphne lancifolia*) and I wonder about it. It never seems to change throughout the seasons. Even on freezing days in the winter when the rhododendrons nearby have curled up their leaves for protection, this tree's attractive lance-shaped leaves look exactly the same. And you can see in the pictures that the rhododendron near it has gone into full protection mode.

There is not a lot of information on this tree. I know from its sign that it is native to Southern Japan and Korea. And according to our curator, VanDusen received the seedling for this tree back in 1987 from UBC Botanical Garden. It was believed to be grown from a wild-collected seed from an expedition to Japan. In southern Japan the summer is hot and humid and the winter is mild. Yet our one Kago-No-Ki tree in the garden (bed 128) continues on as if it were growing in its native country, not feeling the least bit put out during freezing spells.

I think it was perfectly planted. It is well protected, being very close to a mature Douglas fir with two more mature ones nearby. There is a good chance it has tapped into their mycorrhizal connections too. Plus it is sheltered from cold winds with the bank behind it.

Actinodaphne is an Asian genus of the family *Lauraceae*, bay-laurel-related. The genus name refers to the Greek myth of the nymph Daphne, who was turned into a laurel tree. The Greek word 'Daphne' means laurel. This genus of dioecious evergreen trees and shrubs has 140

species in tropical and subtropical regions of Asia. Actinodaphne species require continuously moist soil and do not tolerate drought and frost. The laurel trees are small to medium sized. They fall within the broad-leaved forests; mid-montane deciduous forests; and high-montane mixed stunted forests. Some species grow in high-altitude forests up to 4,900 m/10,800 ft.



Below freezing in the Fern Dell but Kago-No-Ki not affected



Planted very close to a mature Douglas fir and protected by all three

For more information:

[https://uses.plantnet-project.org/en/Actinodaphne_\(PROSEA\)](https://uses.plantnet-project.org/en/Actinodaphne_(PROSEA))

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Actinodaphne>