



Name application: *Salix × cottetii* Lagger ex A.Kern.

Fact Sheet No 7
July 2018

Yulia A. Kuzovkina¹ and Irina V. Belyaeva²

¹Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture, Unit-4067, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT 06269-4067, USA

²Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond, TW9 3AE, UK

Salix × cottetii Lagger ex A.Kern. is a low-growing prostrate or procumbent shrub that was collected by F.J. Lagger in the European Alps and named in honor of his friend, M. Cottet. This hybrid species (or nothotaxon) was described by A. Kerner in 1864 as a cross between *S. myrsinifolia* and *S. retusa*.

Salix × cottetii was introduced into cultivation in 1905 (Rehder, 1927). It is a groundcover with long trailing and somewhat ascending branches and dark, glossy, fresh-green leaves, which can be used in rock, alpine, or small urban gardens.

*Verification of willows in various collections in Europe and stocks in the North American nursery trade revealed that three different plants are cultivated in the Old and New Worlds under the name *S. × cottetii*.*

- The first plant, which matches the description of the type and is positively identified as *S. × cottetii*, is a prostrate shrub with pistillate flowers.
- The second plant is also a prostrate shrub, but represented by a clone with staminate flowers. Based on the morphological characters it is a hybrid of *S. myrsinifolia* L. × *S. repens* L. It was obtained from European collections.
- The third plant is an upright shrub with pistillate flowers, which is cultivated as *S. × cottetii* ‘Bankers’. This plant was introduced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for erosion control and described as a small to medium sized sterile hybrid growing to 6-8 feet tall.



Salix × cottetii Lagger ex A.Kern.: prostrate habit (left, Reykjavik Botanical Garden, Iceland. Photo courtesy of M. Dodge, Vermont Willow Nursery), a pistillate catkin (middle, Botanical Garden Yekaterinburg. Photo by O. Epantschintseva) and branchlets (right, Reykjavik Botanical Garden, Iceland. Photo courtesy of M. Dodge, Vermont Willow Nursery).



A staminate clone of *S. myrsinifolia* L. × *S. repens* L. often erroneously cultivated as *S. × cottetii* in Europe: prostrate habit (left), staminate catkins (middle) and branchlet with catkins (right). Photo by A. Marchenko.



A staminate clone erroneously cultivated as *S. × cottetii* Jos. Kern. ‘Banks’ in the USA: upright habit (left), pistillate catkins upright habit (middle) and a branchlet (right). Photo courtesy of M. Dodge, Vermont Willow Nursery.

It was proposed that the clone cultivated in the USA as *S. × cottetii* ‘Bankers’ (USDA NRCS, 2002, USDA, ARS, National Genetic Resources Program, 2015) be referred as *S. ‘Bankers’* until its parentage is determined. Interestingly, the morphological characters of this taxon are similar to some North American species (such as *S. eriocephala* or *S. hastata*).

Comparisons of the morphological characters of these three plants are presented in the table below (Kuzovkina, Epantchintseva and Belyaeva, 2016):

Characters	<i>S. × cottetii</i>	<i>S. myrsinifolia</i> × <i>S. repens</i>	<i>S. ‘Bankers’</i>
Habit	low-growing prostrate	low-growing prostrate, but more vigorous than <i>S. × cottetii</i> forming carpets several meters across	upright
Height	4-6 inches	4-6 inches	6-8 feet
Branches	white pubescent, later becoming glabrous yellow-brown; non-fragile	green later becoming brown; non-fragile	lime green later becoming darker green; glabrous, fragile
Winter buds	pubescent, obtuse	glabrous, obtuse 5 mm long	glabrous, acute
Leaves	2-4 cm long, pubescent on both surfaces when young; equally green on both sides	4-5 cm long, glabrous; upper surface of the leaves is dark and glossy, lower surface is light green	6-8 cm long, glabrous; upper surface of the leaves is light green and not glossy, lower surface is pale green
Stipules	without stipules	with small stipules 2-3 mm long	with prominent stipules 5 mm long
Catkins	with pistillate and staminate flowers in different clones	with staminate flowers	with pistillate flowers

References:

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