



Pinus glabra Spruce Pine¹

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INTRODUCTION

This heavily-foliated, much-branched evergreen has a bushy, irregular canopy of dark green, soft, two to three-inch, twisted needles and a trunk that often becomes twisted and curved with age (Fig. 1). Do not expect a row of Spruce Pine to form a uniformly-shaped canopy of pine needles. The lower branches on Spruce Pine making it ideal for use as a windbreak, large-scale screen or specimen and also creates light shade beneath larger trees. Although capable of reaching 80 feet in height in the woods, Spruce Pine is often seen at 30 to 50 feet when grown in the open and grows slowly. The reddish grey-brown bark has shallow ridges and furrows. The 2.5-inch-diameter cones remain on the branches for three to four years and are a source of food for wildlife.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Pinus glabra*

Pronunciation: PIE-nus GLAY-bruh

Common name(s): Spruce Pine

Family: *Pinaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 8 through 9 (Fig. 2)

Origin: native to North America

Uses: Bonsai; large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size); wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; reclamation plant; shade tree; specimen; residential street tree; Christmas tree; no proven urban tolerance

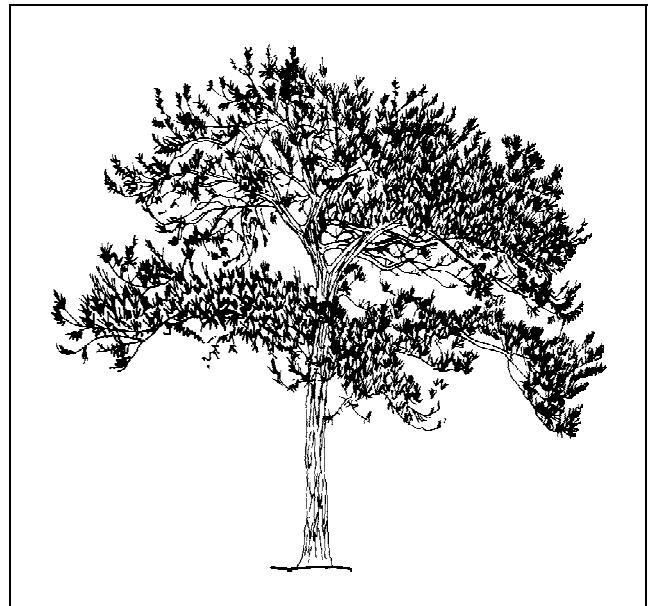


Figure 1. Mature Spruce Pine.

Availability: grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

DESCRIPTION

Height: 30 to 60 feet

Spread: 25 to 40 feet

Crown uniformity: irregular outline or silhouette

Crown shape: oval; round

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: slow

Texture: fine

1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-466, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October 1994.
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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate; spiral

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: needle-like (filiform)

Leaf venation: parallel

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen; fragrant;
needle leaf evergreen

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: yellow

Flower characteristics: inconspicuous and not
showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: oval (Fig. 3)

Fruit length: 1 to 3 inches

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: brown

Fruit characteristics: attracts squirrels and other
mammals; fruit, twigs, or foliage cause significant
litter; persistent on the tree; showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: grow mostly upright and will
not droop; not particularly showy; should be grown
with a single leader; no thorns

Pruning requirement: needs little pruning to develop
a strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: brown

Current year twig thickness: thin

Wood specific gravity: 0.44

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in part shade/part sun;
tree grows in full sun

Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; slightly alkaline;
acidic; extended flooding; well-drained

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: low

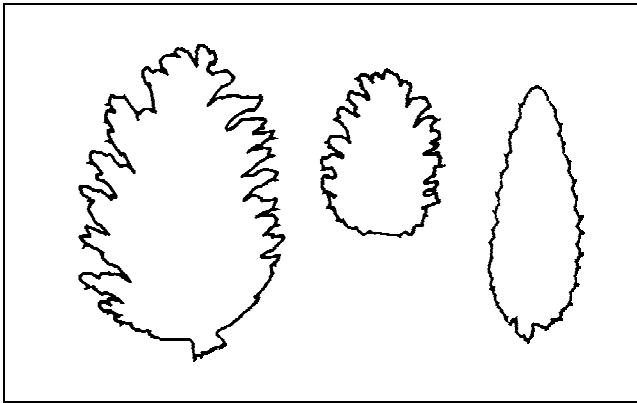


Figure 3. Fruit of Spruce Pine.

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding tree: not particularly outstanding

Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: not known to be susceptible

Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

USE AND MANAGEMENT

Growing in full sun on moist fertile soils, this North American native will also tolerate poor, dry soils, as well as wet sites better than other Pines. Many people forget how picturesque this Pine can become as it grows older. It should be used more as specimen tree. Pines are deep-rooted except on poorly-drained sites where there will be only shallow roots. The tap root can make them difficult to transplant from the wild.

Pines grow best on acid soil and are usually not recommended for planting in soil which have a high soil pH. Grows best without grass competition. Spruce Pine is unusual among the Pines in that it will grow in partial shade.

Propagation is by seed.

Pests

Some adelgids will appear as white cottony growths on the bark. All types produce honeydew which may support sooty mold. European Pine shoot moth causes young shoots to fall over. Infested shoots may exude resin. The insects can be found in the shoots during May. Pesticides are only effective when caterpillars are moving from overwintering sites to

new shoots. This occurs when needle growth is about half developed.

Bark beetles bore into trunks making small holes scattered up and down the trunk. Stressed trees are more susceptible to attack. The holes look like shotholes. Keep trees healthy.

Sawfly larvae are variously colored but generally feed in groups on the needles. Some sawfly larvae will flex or rear back in unison when disturbed. Sawflies can cause rapid defoliation of branches if left unchecked.

Pine needle miner larvae feed inside needles causing them to turn yellow and dry up.

Pine needle scale is a white, elongated scale found on the needles. Pine tortoise scale is brown and found on twigs. Depending on the scale, horticultural oil may control overwintering stages.

Pine spittle bug lives and hides in a foamy mass but is relatively harmless.

Spruce mites cause damage to older needles, and are usually active in the spring and fall. Mites cause older needles to become yellowed or stippled.

Diseases

Resistant to fusiform rust. Canker diseases may occasionally cause dieback of landscape Pines. Keep trees healthy and prune out the infected branches.