



BLUE SPRUCE *Picea pungens* Engelm.

A native of the Rocky Mountain region, blue spruce will grow on a variety of sites and tolerate a wide range of growing conditions. These factors, plus the striking color of its foliage, contribute to its popularity as an ornamental species, particularly in the East where it is planted as a decorative tree. It does not readily become naturalized in Maine, and therefore is not likely to be found growing in forest settings. It can grow to be a large tree 1–2 feet in diameter and to about 80 feet in height. It is pyramidal in shape.

Foliage coloration varies from silvery-blue to blue-green; the intensity of blue varies between individual specimens. The **bark** is gray to red-brown and scaly. The **leaves** are $\frac{1}{2}$ – $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, stiff, very sharp-pointed, and strongly incurved and covered with a waxy coating that gives the blue color.

Blue spruce is not native to Maine and is not likely to be found growing in forest settings.

Cones are light brown, oblong, $2\frac{1}{2}$ –4 inches long, with thin, flexible, notched scales. The twigs are stouter than the other spruces, hairless and tan.

Wild trees growing in the Rocky Mountains seldom have the intense coloration of the cultivated varieties planted here. Even in its native range, the wood is not often used commercially because of its limited availability and its tendency to be brittle and full of knots.

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Blue Spruce

Circumference: 100"

Height: 91'

Crown Spread: 27'

Location: Auburn

