



RED SPRUCE *Picea rubens* Sarg.



Red spruce is one of our most valuable trees for the production of building lumber.

Red spruce is commonly found throughout the state. It grows on well-drained, rocky upland soils, and particularly on the north side of mountain slopes where it may be the major species present. The spreading branches form a somewhat conical, narrow head in young trees. The trunk is long, with a slight taper. It grows to considerable size, and is capable of attaining a height of 60–80 feet and a diameter of 1–2 feet, but occasionally exceeds these measurements. Red spruce is shade-tolerant and will become established in the understory of mixed stands.

The **bark** on mature trees is thick and is broken into thin, reddish-brown scales of irregular shape. The **leaves** are dark green, often with a yellow tinge, and are very shiny. They are about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long, sharp-pointed, stiff, prickly to the touch, and point toward the tip of the branch. The **cones** are oblong and usually $1\frac{1}{2}$ –2 inches long. When ripe, they are reddish-brown and quite shiny. The cone scales are stiff like the





black spruce, but the margins are generally without conspicuous notches. The cones begin to drop in autumn or early winter, and are all gone from the branches by the next summer.

The **twigs** have hairs, none of which have a gland at the tip. The inner bark is reddish-brown. The **wood** is fairly soft, light, close-grained and strong, but is not as durable as pine when exposed to the weather.

Red spruce is one of our most valuable trees for the production of building lumber. It is used for joists, sills, rafters, pilings, weir poles and heavy construction timbers. It is a principal wood used in the manufacture of paper pulp, and is valuable for the sounding boards of musical instruments. Pitch for spruce gum is obtained largely from this tree.



Red spruce is the characteristic tree of the "Acadian forest" of northern New England and the Canadian Maritimes.



MAINE REGISTER OF BIG TREES 2008
Red Spruce Circumference: 103" Height: 87' Crown Spread: 35' Location: T15 R9 WELS

