

Maine Tree Species Fact Sheet

Common Name: Red Pine (Norway Pine or Hard Pine)

Botanical Name: *Pinus resinosa*

Tree Type: Coniferous

Physical Description:

Growth Habit: Red pine does well on exposed, dry, acid, sandy or gravelly soils. The bark on young trees is scaly and orange-red, eventually breaking up into large, flat, reddish brown, superficially scaly plates, irregularly diamond-shaped in outline. The twigs are medium textured, orange-brown in color with orange-brown buds. The evergreen leaves (needles) are arranged in clusters of 2 and are 4 to 6 inches long, dark green, soft and flexible. They needles break cleanly, at a sharp angle, when doubled between the fingers.

Height: When growing under natural conditions, the red pine reaches a height of 90-100 feet and a trunk diameter of 30 to 40 inches. This species is hardy to Zone 5.

Shape: Young red pines have branches extending to the ground and form a conical outline. Later, the head is rounded and picturesque. In old age, the crown is somewhat symmetrically oval with tufted foliage.

Fruit/Seed Description/Dispersal Methods:

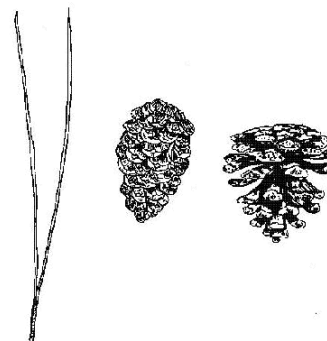
The flowers of the red pine are monoecious. The males are almost round, light red in color and occur in large clusters at branch tips. The female flowers are a round, reddish-brown short cone. The cones are much like an egg in shape, about 2 inches long and borne on short stalks. The base of fallen cones is hollow. The cones mature in the fall of the second season and usually remain on the branches until the following summer. The cone scales are smooth and without spines.

Range within Maine:

Red pine, though common, is found only locally throughout the state, growing on dry, rocky ridges, or light, dandy soil. Groves are usually scattered through forests of other species. The beautiful "Cathedral Pines" occur near Eustis.

Distinguishing Features:

The tree gets its name from the bright orange-colored or reddish bark, which divides into large plates as the tree matures. The leaves of the red pine are arranged in clusters of 2, which break cleanly, at a sharp angle, when doubled between the fingers.



Interesting Features:

The red pine is native only to North America. Red pine is often called Norway pine, and this name comes from pre-colonial times, when English explorers confused the tree with Norway spruce. Red and white pines often grow in the same environment. Like white pine, red pine was often used in ship masts. The British Navy was buying trunks from North America as late as 1875.

Red pine is used in construction and is made into interior wood trim, flooring, poles, piles, pulpwood, Christmas trees, bridges, railroad ties, and firewood. The color of the wood varies from light brown to reddish brown. It is quite light, slightly resinous, and straight-grained. Red pine absorbs preservatives well. The bark was formerly used for tanning leather. Red pine is used extensively in reforestation and dune and snowdrift control.

Relationship to Wildlife:

White-tailed deer browse saplings and young trees and snowshoe hares feed on seedlings. Red squirrels, chipmunks, mice, red crossbills, pine grosbeaks, and pine siskins eat pine seeds.

Landscape Use:

Red pine is a picturesque and desirable tree for the landscape, which survives under adverse conditions.

Common Problems or Pests of the Tree in Maine:

The *Pinus* genus is susceptible to a variety of diseases and pests including root rot, rusts, cankers, blights, scale, sawflies, pine needle miner, pine spittlebugs, pine webworm and the pine root collar weevil.

References:

Forest Trees of Maine. Twelfth Edition. Maine Forest Service/Department of Conservation. 1995.

Know Your Trees. Cope, J.A. and F.E. Winch. Cornell Cooperative Extension. 1992.

Manual of Woody Landscape Plants, 5th Edition. Dirr, Michael A. Publishing L.L.C. 1998.

