

# Maine Tree Species Fact Sheet

**Common Name:** Jack Pine (Scrub Pine, Banksian Pine, Gray Pine, and Hudson Bay Pine)

**Botanical Name:** *Pinus banksiana*

**Tree Type:** Conifer

## **Physical Description:**

**Growth Habit:** Jack pine is a slow to medium growing tree, which grows best on sandy, rocky and shallow acid soils. The bark is thin, reddish-brown to gray on young stems and becoming dark brown and flaky. On old trunks the bark is furrowed into irregular, thick plates. The leaves are in clusters of two and are  $\frac{3}{4}$  to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches long. They are stout, yellow-green when young and turn a dark green when older. They are flat and twisted at the base. The buds are dark brown,  $\frac{1}{8}$  –  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches long cylindrical, and resinous with closely pressed scales.

**Height:** The Jack pine reaches a height of 50 – 60 feet with a trunk diameter of 8-10 inches. This species is hardy to Zone 2.

**Shape:** The Jack pine is pyramidal in youth and becomes open, spreading, often shrubby and flat-topped in maturity.

## **Fruit/Seed Description/Dispersal Methods:**

Jack pine is a monoecious species. Ovulate cones are usually borne on primary and secondary branches in the upper tree crown and staminate cones are usually borne on tertiary branches lower in the crown. The cones require 2 years to mature, are slender,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  - 2 inches long, without a stalk and are curved. The scales have minute prickles, which are often deciduous. The cones remain closed for several years (unless they are exposed to extreme heat), and often do not fall for 12 – 15 years.

## **Range within Maine:**

Jack pine is known to occur naturally at Alamoosook Lake in Orland, Schoodic Point in Winter Harbor, Great Wass Island in Beals, Matagamon Lake, Cliff Lake, Lobster Lake, and in the areas south and west of Jackman.

## **Distinguishing Features:**

Jack pine grows farther north than any other American pine.

## **Interesting Features:**

The wood is moderately hard, heavy and close-grained. It is used mostly for pulp.



## **Relationship to Wildlife:**

Jack pine is a breeding area for the Kirkland's warbler, a rare and endangered species. They also provide food and shelter for wild game species, including the snowshoe hare and white-tailed deer. White-tailed deer can kill young Jack pines and snowshoe hare can severely damage their reproduction. Porcupines can also cause extensive damage in older stands.

## **Landscape Use:**

Jack pine is not a very ornamental species but it is adaptable for windbreaks and mass plantings in sand. It is valued for its extreme hardiness and suitability to the colder regions.

## **Common Problems or Pests of the Tree in Maine:**

The Jack pine budworm is the most important defoliator of this species in the Northeastern United States. Other insects that affect this species include root borers, pine root collar weevil, shoot and stem borers, white pine weevil, needle miners, scale, sawflies and wood aphids. Diseases that commonly attack Jack pine include needle rust fungus, blights, and rusts.

## **References:**

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

*Manual of Woody Landscape Plants, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition.* Dirr, Michael A. Publishing L.L.C. 1998.

*United States Dept. of Agriculture: Silvics of North America:*

[http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/silvics\\_manual/volume\\_1/pinus/banksiana.htm](http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/silvics_manual/volume_1/pinus/banksiana.htm)

