

TREES *of* BC

Sitka spruce

(*Picea sitchensis*)



Bark

The bark is very thin, brown or purplish grey, and breaks up into small scales.

Leaves

Needles are light green to bluish-green, stiff, and sharp. They are four-sided but slightly flattened with two white bands running along the upper surface and two narrower bands along the lower surface. The needles are arranged spirally along the twig and are attached by small pegs which remain on the twig after the needles fall.

Cones

Seed cones are reddish- to yellowish-brown and hang from the crown. Their seed scales are thin, wavy, and irregularly toothed. Pollen cones are red.

Habitat

In coastal forests, Sitka spruce is found from low to high/mid elevations, growing with Western hemlock, Western redcedar, and Yellow-cedar. The forest floor is often thick with mosses, and horsetails, blueberries, and deer fern.

70 m



PROVINCIAL RANGE



Engelmann spruce

(*Picea engelmannii*)



Bark

The bark is loose, scaly, and reddish-brown to grey.

Leaves

Needles are four-sided and sharp, but not particularly stiff. They are deep bluish-green with two white bands on both the upper and lower surfaces. The needles are arranged in all directions on the twigs.

Cones

Seed cones are yellow to purplish-brown and hang from the upper branches. Their papery seed scales are tapered at both ends and have a ragged outer edge. Pollen cones are most commonly yellow to purplish-brown.

Habitat

Engelmann spruce is an interior species that commonly occurs with Subalpine fir in areas with long, cold winters and short, cool summers. It grows best on deep, rich soils with adequate moisture. In drier areas, Engelmann spruce grows with Lodgepole pine. On wetter sites, huckleberries, white-flowered rhododendron, and Sitka valerian commonly occur.

50 m



PROVINCIAL RANGE



Black spruce

(*Picea mariana*)



Bark

The bark is thin, scaly and dark greenish-brown.

Leaves

Needles are blue-green, short, stiff, and four-sided. The needles are arranged in all directions along the twig or mostly pointing upwards.

Cones

Seed cones are small and purplish. The old cones hang on the tree for several years. Pollen cones are dark red.

Habitat

Black spruce grows throughout the northern part of the province and tolerates poor growing conditions. It often occurs in pure groups of trees or with Lodgepole pine and White spruce. It is frequently found in cold, poorly drained areas, such as swamps and bogs, along with sphagnum mosses, horsetails, lingonberry, and Labrador tea.

Black spruce forests are rich in wildlife. Moose, muskrat, and mink are numerous and many birds eat the abundant insects in these wet, boggy areas.

20 m



PROVINCIAL RANGE

