

EASTERN REDCEDAR

Juniperus virginiana L.

plant symbol = JUVI

Contributed by: USDA NRCS Plant Materials Program



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Southern Wetland Flora
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Uses

Windbreaks: Plant eastern redcedar in the outer rows of multi-row plantings where it will not be overtopped by taller trees. It can be used in single-row windbreaks when a dense, medium height barrier is desired.

Wildlife: This species provides food and cover for numerous birds and mammals. Winter food and protection is particularly important for pheasant, mule deer and whitetail deer.

Recreation and Beautification: It is suitable for screen plantings. Its year-long coloration and attractiveness to wildlife adds variety to recreational plantings.

Status

Please consult the PLANTS Web site and your State Department of Natural Resources for this plant's current status (e.g. threatened or endangered species, state noxious status, and wetland indicator values).

Description

Juniperus virginiana L., eastern redcedar, is a small evergreen tree, commonly 10 to 40 feet, of pyramidal shape becoming rounder in age. Fruits pale-blue with whitish bloom, fleshy 'berries' (cones), 1/4 inch diameter, ripening the first season, seeds 1 to 2 in each cone, bony-coated; flowers small, cone-like on end of short twigs, male and female borne on separate plants. Leaves opposite, scalelike, covering older twigs closely in alternating pairs to 1/8 inch long, on new shoots awl shaped, sharp pointed and spreading, 1/4 inch long, dark green. Stem single with upright or spreading branches, bark reddish-brown, thin and shreddy, branchlets very slender; roots deep, widely spreading.

Adaptation and Distribution

It is native to eastern North America, where it occurs strongly on limestone derived soils. and is cultivated in Wyoming and Colorado for shelterbelts and ornamental uses below 6,000 feet. This species has a wide distribution and is found on many types of soil ranging from acid sands to those derived from limestone. It does best on dry soils in full sunlight, and is winter hardy and tolerant of droughty and salty soils. Like most junipers, it is very slow growing and is moderately long lived.

Eastern redcedar is distributed throughout the east, and lower and upper midwest. For a current distribution map, please consult the Plant Profile page for this species on the PLANTS Website.

Establishment

Seedlings should be planted in a firm weed free bed at a spacing of 3 to 6 feet. Seedlings should be placed in a hole or furrow large enough to contain the entire root system without bending.

Management

Weed and other competing vegetation must be controlled the first two years of establishment. This plant will survive in moist, deep loam to sand at pH of 6.0 to 8.0, will tolerate alkaline and saline conditions. This plant is invasive in poorly managed or extensively grazed pastures and rangelands, especially those with neutral pH soils.

Pests and Potential Problems

It is relatively free of serious insect and disease problems. It is the alternate host for the cedar-apple rust disease which does very little harm to this species but causes serious damage to apples and other pome fruits.

Cultivars, Improved, and Selected Materials (and area of origin)

Eastern redcedar seedlings are available from most commercial nurseries and government nurseries dealing with conservation species. 'Canaert' and 'Taylor' are two cultivars.

Prepared By & Species Coordinator:

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For more information about this and other plants, please contact your local NRCS field office or Conservation District, and visit the PLANTS <<http://plants.usda.gov>> and Plant Materials Program Web sites <<http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov>>.

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