



Juniperus silicicola Southern Redcedar¹

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INTRODUCTION

This densely-foliated, wide pyramidal, columnar or oval evergreen grows fairly quickly, ultimately reaching heights up to 40 feet with a 25-foot spread (Fig. 1). Some individual plants grow wider than tall as they grow older. Some botanists do not make a distinction between *Juniperus silicicola* and *Juniperus virginiana*. Its fine-textured, medium green leaves and drooping branchlets help to soften the rather symmetrical, oval juvenile form. Mature specimens of Southern Redcedar take on a flat-topped, almost windswept appearance, making them very picturesque. Bark and trunk on older specimens take on a delightful, 'old-tree' look.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Juniperus silicicola*

Pronunciation: joo-NIP-er-us sill-liss-sih-KOLE-uh

Common name(s): Southern Redcedar

Family: *Cupressaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 8 through 10 (Fig. 2)

Origin: native to North America

Uses: Bonsai; wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; reclamation plant; screen; residential street tree; Christmas tree; tree has been successfully grown in urban areas where air pollution, poor drainage, compacted soil, and/or drought are common

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

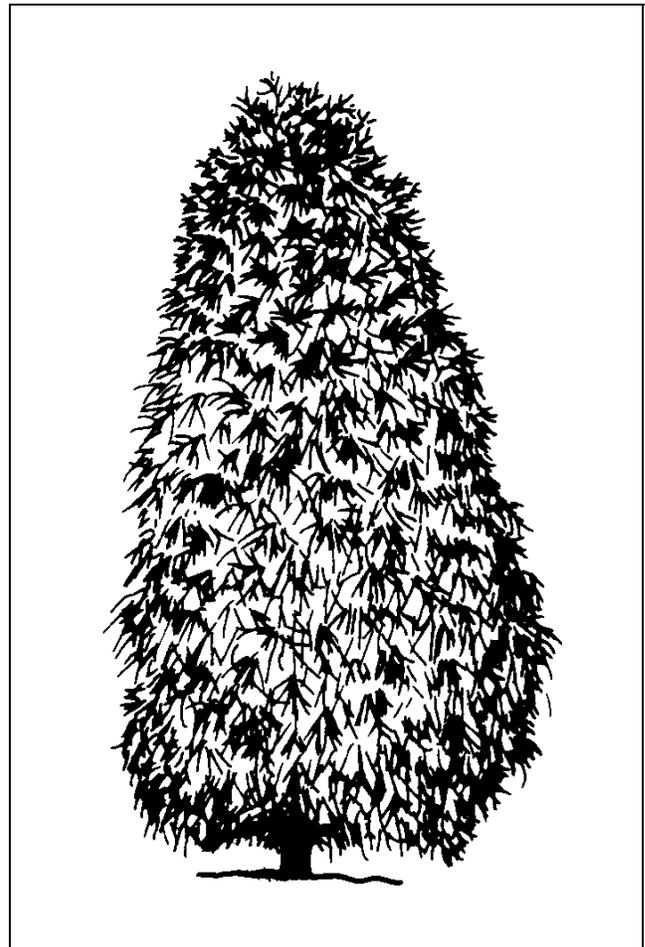


Figure 1. Middle-aged Southern Redcedar.

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

DESCRIPTION

Height: 30 to 45 feet
Spread: 20 to 30 feet
Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms
Crown shape: columnar; oval; pyramidal
Crown density: open
Growth rate: fast
Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite; whorled (Fig. 3)
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: entire; terminal spine
Leaf shape: awl-like; scale-like
Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen
Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: no fall color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower characteristics: inconspicuous and not showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: round
Fruit length: < .5 inch
Fruit covering: fleshy
Fruit color: blue; purple
Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; no significant litter problem; showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; showy trunk; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns
Pruning requirement: needs little pruning to develop a strong structure
Breakage: susceptible to breakage either at the crotch due to poor collar formation, or the wood itself is weak and tends to break
Current year twig color: brown; green

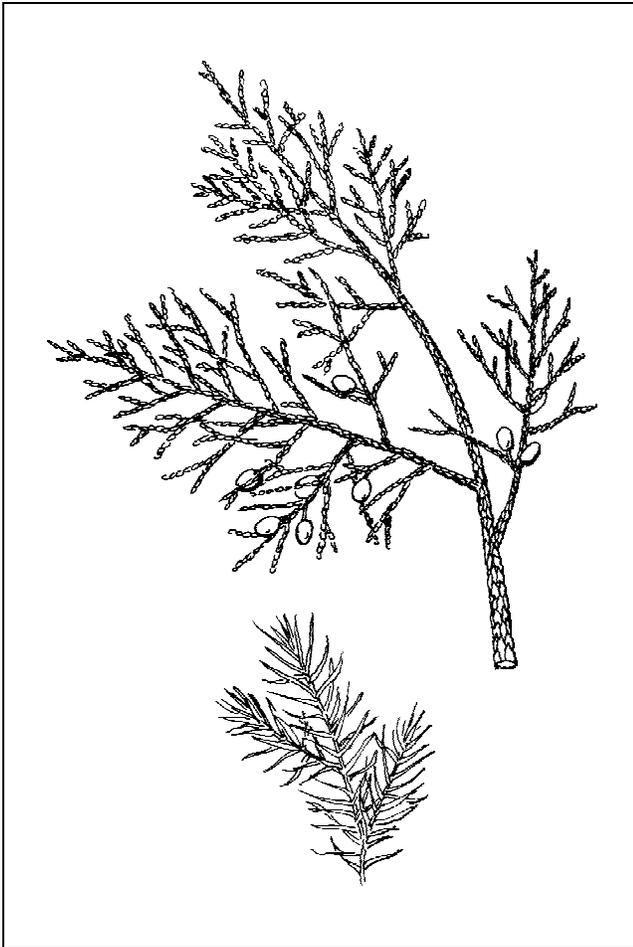


Figure 3. Foliage of Southern Redcedar.

Current year twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in part shade/part sun;
tree grows in full sun

Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; acidic; alkaline;
well-drained

Drought tolerance: high

Aerosol salt tolerance: high

Soil salt tolerance: good

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding tree: not particularly outstanding

Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: not known to be susceptible

Pest resistance: no pests are normally seen on the tree

USE AND MANAGEMENT

The dense growth and attractive foliage make Southern Redcedar a favorite for windbreaks, screens, and wildlife-cover for large-scale landscapes. Its high salt-tolerance makes it ideal for seaside locations. Redcedar can make a nice Christmas tree, and the fragrant wood is popular for repelling insects. Cedar Key, Florida, once had extensive redcedar forests before the lumber was extensively harvested and the wood used for chests and pencils. Although not currently used often as a street tree, its wood is strong, the foliage is clean, and the fruit is small making it a suitable candidate. There are some nice examples of street tree use in southern cities. With proper pruning to remove lower branches, it should adapt well to street-scapes.

Planted in full sun or partial shade, Southern Redcedar will easily grow on a variety of soils, including clay. Growth may be poor in landscapes which are over-irrigated. Plants are difficult to transplant due to a coarse root system, except when quite small. Water until well-established and then forget about the tree. It performs admirably with no care, even on alkaline soil and along the coast. Usually insects and diseases are not a problem if grown in the full sun. There may be local restrictions on planting this tree near apple orchards because it is the alternate host for cedar-apple rust.

Propagation is by seed, which germinate faster if planted as soon as the cones mature or if given a stratification period. Also, tip cuttings can be rooted.

No cultivars are listed but there is ample opportunity to propagate and culture from the wide diversity of shapes and growth habits exhibited by this tree.

Pests

Usually none are serious.

Bagworm caterpillars web foliage and debris together to make bags up to two inches long. The insects live in the bags and emerge to feed on the foliage. Use sprays of *Bacillus thuringiensis*. The insects can also be picked off the plants by hand.

Juniper scale causes yellowed needles, and infected branches fail to produce new growth. The

scale is round and at first white, later turning gray or black.

The Juniper webworm webs twigs and needles together, causing them to brown and die. The larva is 1/2-inch-long and is brown with darker stripes. The larvae are often in the densest part of the plant and can go unnoticed.

Mites cause stippled and bronzed foliage.

Diseases

Twig blights cause death and browning of twig tips. The diseases may progress down the stem killing the whole branch. Small lesions may be seen at the base of dead tissue. Prune out dead branch tips. Dieback from *Kabatina* blight appears in early spring, from *Phomopsis* in summer.

Three rust diseases seen most often are cedar-apple rust, hawthorn rust, and quince rust. The most common is cedar-apple rust. On Juniper the disease forms galls and orange jelly-like horns in spring. The horns are most likely to form following periods of rainy, warm weather. Spores formed in the horns infect the alternate host. The diseases are more serious on the alternate host than Juniper. A separation of a few hundred yards may help avoid the disease. Prune out the spore horns when seen in the spring.

Junipers are not tolerant of ice coatings. Expect dieback when Junipers are covered with ice for several days. Removing the ice is impractical.