

# *Pseudolarix kaempferi* Golden Larch<sup>1</sup>

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## INTRODUCTION

This large but graceful, uncommon deciduous conifer reaches 40 to 70 feet in height with a straight trunk and a spread of 20 to 40 feet (Fig. 1). Since it grows very slowly, it is usually not seen more than 30 to 40 feet tall. The silhouette is a rather open but symmetrical pyramidal shape with pendulous branch tips. The fine-textured needled foliage is 1.5 to 2 inches long and pale green above, blue/green below. The foliage turns a brilliant yellow in the fall for a short time but long enough to make a very striking landscape statement. The three-inch-long, upright cones are interspersed along the branches, and the reddish-brown bark is rugged and furrowed.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**Scientific name:** *Pseudolarix kaempferi*  
**Pronunciation:** soo-doe-LAIR-icks KEM-fer-eye  
**Common name(s):** Golden Larch  
**Family:** *Pinaceae*  
**USDA hardiness zones:** 5 through 7 (Fig. 2)  
**Origin:** not native to North America  
**Uses:** Bonsai; specimen; no proven urban tolerance  
**Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree

## DESCRIPTION

**Height:** 40 to 70 feet  
**Spread:** 20 to 40 feet  
**Crown uniformity:** symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms

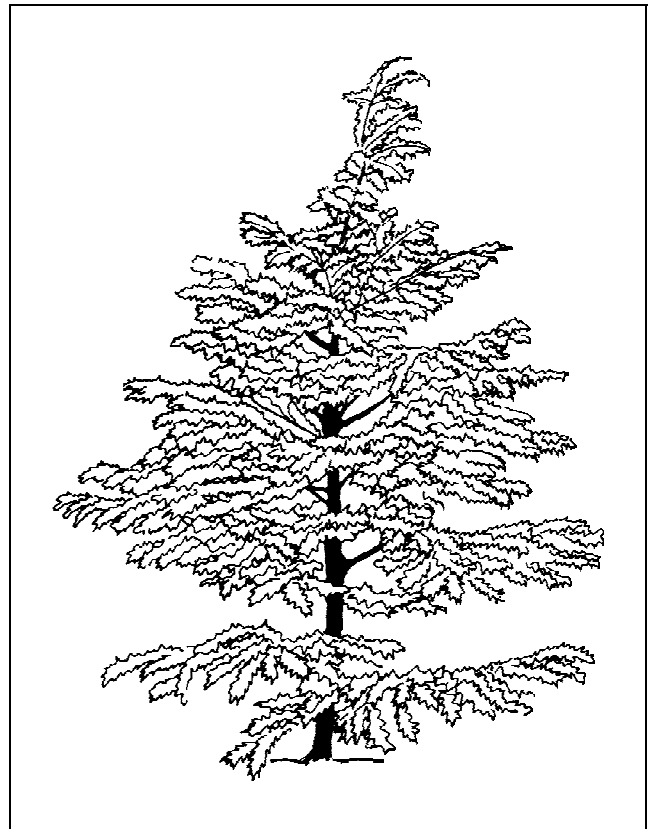


Figure 1. Young Golden Larch.

**Crown shape:** pyramidal  
**Crown density:** open  
**Growth rate:** slow  
**Texture:** fine

1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-525, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October 1994.
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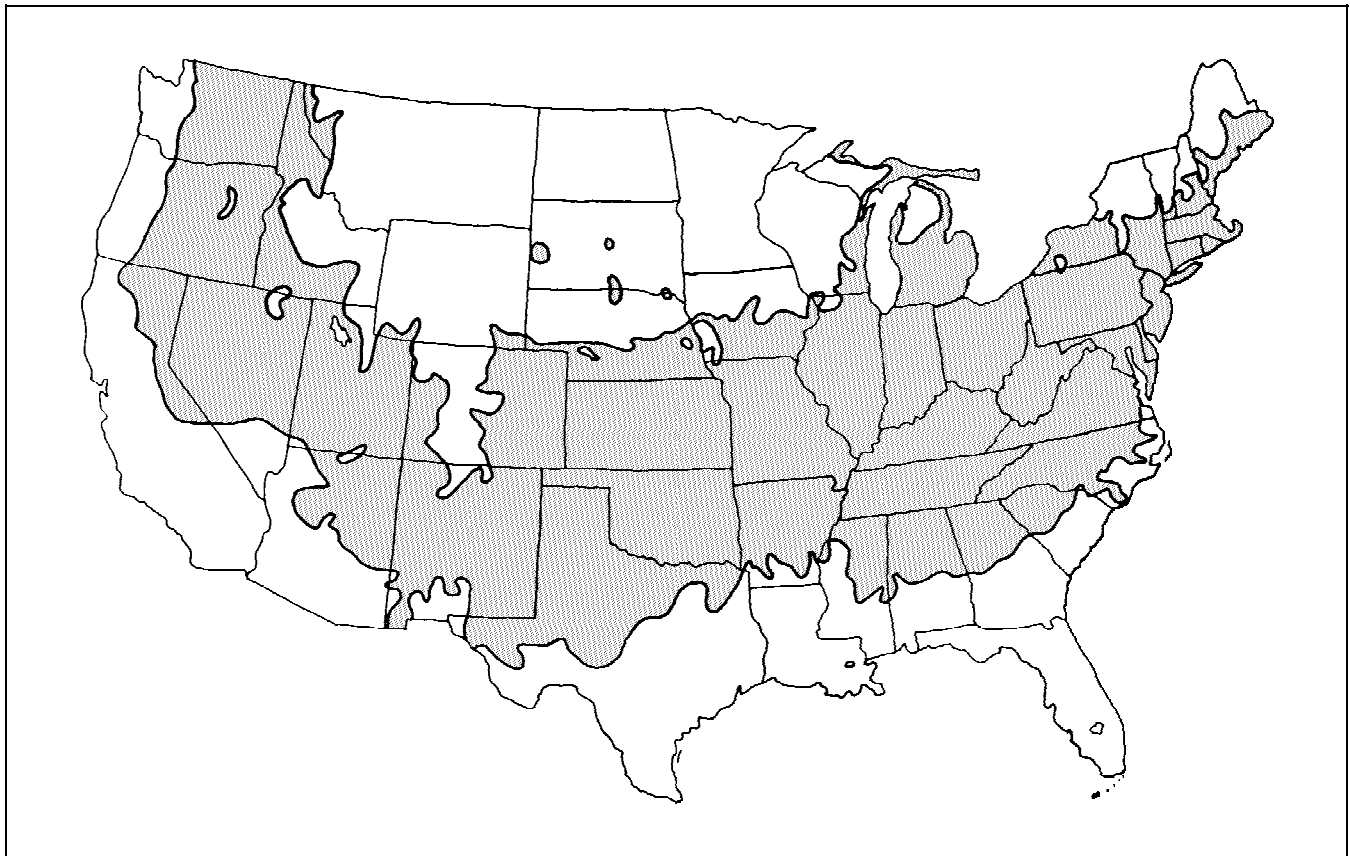


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

### Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** spiral (Fig. 3)

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** linear; needle-like (filiform)

**Leaf venation:** parallel

**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous

**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches; less than 2 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** yellow

**Fall characteristic:** showy

### Flower

**Flower color:** yellow

**Flower characteristics:** inconspicuous and not showy; spring flowering

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** oval

**Fruit length:** 1 to 3 inches

**Fruit covering:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** brown

**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter problem

### 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:** resistant

**Current year twig color:** brown; green

**Current year twig thickness:** thin

### Culture

**Light requirement:** tree grows in full sun

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

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

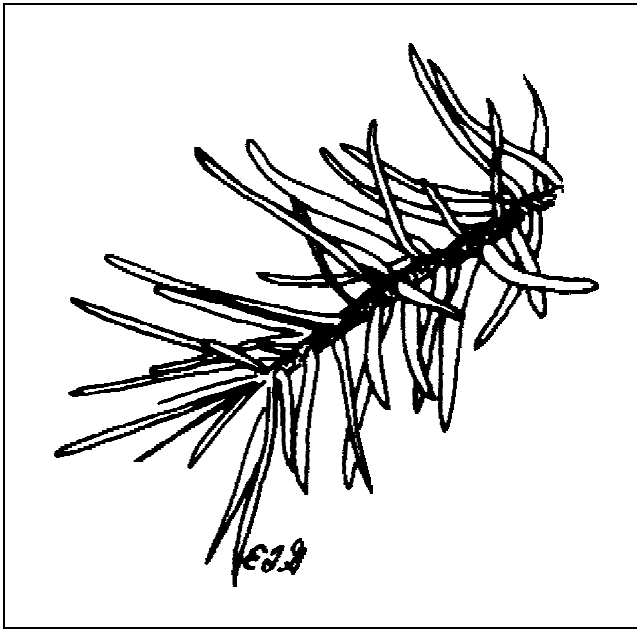


Figure 3. Foliage of Golden Larch.

### Other

**Roots:** surface roots are usually not a problem

**Winter interest:** tree has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

**Outstanding tree:** tree has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**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 attractive bark, strong pyramidal shape, and wide-spreading branches make Golden Larch particularly attractive in the winter landscape. Its slow growth and attractive form makes it a popular choice for containers and for use as a bonsai. It can be used in residential landscapes since it grows at a slow rate. Plant it in the open so the form can be fully appreciated. Locate it far enough from sidewalks and buildings so lower branches will not have to be pruned.

Golden Larch should be grown in full sun on deep, rich, well-drained, moist acid soil where the trees can be protected from harsh, cold winds. The trees should not be planted in limestone soils and they are not tolerant of clay unless located on a slope where drainage would be excellent.

The cultivar 'Nana' is a dwarf form. 'Annesleyana' is a dense, dwarf form with weeping branches.

Propagation is by seed, although it is difficult to obtain fertile seed.

### Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.