



Scotch Pine,

Pinus sylvestris

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Summary

Foliage: About 3 inches long; 2 needles per fascicle; evergreen

Height: About 50 feet

Spread: About 20 to 30 feet

Shape: Conical in youth; irregular at maturity

Main Features

Scotch pine is a medium tree. Like most pines, the first 20 or so years of its life it has a conical shape and with maturity it loses its lower limbs and has an irregular flat topped or oval shape. Scotch pine has a relatively showy orange colored bark (with the exception of the lower trunk). It is also relatively drought tolerant, thus it is suitable for landscape sites that tend to be dry. There are over 50 cultivars, and there is a great amount of variation (hardiness, form, needle length and color, and adaptability to climate and soil conditions) within the species. Scotch pine has a huge native range; it can be found from western Europe to western Asia, which explains the great amount of variation in the species.

Plant Needs

Zone: 3 to 7 (may languish in the higher temperature regions of zone 7)

Light: Full sun

Moisture: Average to somewhat dry

Soil type: Average to less than ideal

pH range: Acid

Functions

Scotch pine can certainly serve as a specimen plant (sufficient attributes that allow it to be featured as a focal point) due to its mature picturesque (gnarly) form and orange bark.

Care

Scotch pine is relatively carefree. However, there are a few pest problems (*Sphaeropsis*, a fungal disease; nematodes; and pine wilt fungus) that can pose problematic Scotch pine health issues. One should check with the local Extension agent or garden center personnel to determine the prevalence of these pests in your area.

Additional Information

Scotch pine is a popular Christmas tree species.