

WACD PLANT MATERIALS CENTER
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Concolor Fir (*Abies concolor*)

Distribution

Concolor fir, also commonly called white fir, is native to the western United States. They can be found from 6,000 ft. to 11,000 ft. in elevation in the Rocky Mountains in Colorado and New Mexico to the Coast Range in California and Oregon. Near the Pacific Coast it can occur as low as 2,300 ft. elevation.

Growth Habit

Concolor Fir can reach heights of 130-150 feet and may occasionally reach 350 years of age. In the average home landscape the tree will reach 30-50 feet tall and 15-25 feet wide when mature. The tree grows in an almost perfect pyramidal Christmas tree shape when young with horizontally tiered branches. At maturity the tree develops a dome-like crown. The short, flat, soft needles are silvery blue-green both above and below, although the undersides may have a whitish bloom. The needles have a slight citrus smell when broken. The smooth gray bark develops attractive deep, irregular furrows and irregular, flattened scales on mature trees. The oblong cones are held upright, and vary in color from yellow-green to purple.

Adaptability

Not only is it beautiful, but it is one of the most adaptable firs. Concolor fir is a fairly slow-growing, drought-resistant tree. It does best in deep, rich and well-drained soils. Avoid heavy clay and wet spots, such as near over-irrigated lawns. Concolor fir is tolerant of some shade, although it prefers full sun.

Comments

- This is a very desirable tree in the landscape, but may need some protection on very windy, exposed sites. It has a dense growth structure so it does not need any pruning to keep its shape.
- With its conical form, blue-green foliage and lack of insect or disease problems, it could be used as a substitute for blue spruce.
- It is grown commercially for Christmas tree production.

