PLANT FACT SHEET

# *Picea rubens* Sarg.

**GENUS** *Picea* **FAMILY** Pinaceae

**COMMON NAMES** Red spruce, Eastern spruce, He-balsam, Yellow spruce

## EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

**Edible parts:** Flowers, Gum, bark, Leaves, Seeds, Tea

It has been used to produce spruce beer. The young leafy twigs were boiled.
The gum is used for chewing gum.

## DESCRIPTION

A medium sized tree. It grows to 25 m high. The trunk is 60 cm across. The crown is a rather open cone shape. The bark is reddish-brown and separated into darker scales or plates with age. The branches slope downwards with the tips turned upwards. The leaves are single and curved and 10-16 mm long. They are shiny yellowish green. The tip is blunt. The needles point forward often pressed close to the twig. The cones are oval and 3-5 cm long. They are chocolate brown. The taper to a very short stalk. They scales are stiff and have light lines over them. The cones open with widely spread scales. These are easily separated from the axis.

## HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It grows in moist upland sites in Canada. It is very shade tolerant. It suits hardiness zones 4-8.

## PRODUCTION

### Harvesting and Seed Production

Trees can live for 300 years. There are good seed crops every 2-11 years.

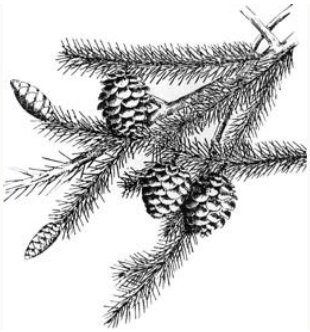
## NOTES

There are between 30 and 40 species of Picea.

## PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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