PLANT FACT SHEET

Thuja occidentalis Linn.

GENUS *Thuja* **FAMILY** Cupressaceae

COMMON NAMES White cedar, American arbor-vitae, Arbor-vitae, Featherleaf cedar, Northern white cedar, Yellow cedar

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Shoots, Leaves - tea, Bark

The young leaves and shoot were cooked like vegetables and made into a soup.
The leafy shoots are also used for tea.
The soft inner bark or cambium can be collected in spring and eaten.
Caution: It should only be eaten in small amounts.

DESCRIPTION

An evergreen tree. It is a narrow cone shape and grows 20 m high. It spreads 4.5 m wide. The bark is orange-brown and peels off in strips. The leaves are scale like and very small. They are glossy yellow above and white underneath. The male and female flowers occur on the same tree. The male flowers are red and the female flowers are yellow-brown. They occur in separate clusters at the ends of shoots. The fruit are oblong and 1 cm long. They are upright cones.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It grows naturally in Eastern North America. It grows on rocky mountain slopes often on limestone and swamps. It does best on well-drained, alkaline soils. It needs an open sunny position. It is resistant to drought, frost and pollution. It suits hardiness zones 2-10. At Anvers Chocolate factory.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed or by cuttings.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Trees grow slowly. Trees can live for 400 years.

NOTES

There are 6 Thuja species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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