PLANT FACT SHEET

# *Picea glauca* (Moench) Voss

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

**COMMON NAMES** Dwarf Alberta Spruce, White Spruce

## EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

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

Spruce oil is distilled from the leaves and twigs and used for flavouring in the food industry. It is used to flavour chewing gum, ice cream, soft drinks and candy.
Young cones are eaten roasted, fried or pickled.
The inner bark is used as an emergency food.
The gum from the trunk can be chewed.
The needles are boiled to make tea.

## DESCRIPTION

A large evergreen tree. It grows 25-36 m high and spreads 3-6 m wide. It is cone shaped. The bark is smooth and thin but becomes darker and scaly with age. The branches turn down but lift at the tips. The leaves are straight and stiff and 15-22 mm long. The tip is pointed but not sharp. The leaves are green covered with a bloom. There are lines of white dots on all sides. They produce a fetid smell when crushed. The cones are oval and 5 cm long. They have a blunt tip and are without stalks. The scales are light brown and thin and tough. They are flexible and close fitting. They open in late summer releasing their seed. They are green at first and later become brown. The mature cones are easily compressed but the scales don't break. The seed are 2-4 mm long.

## HABITAT

It is a cold temperate plant. It is frost hardy. It grows on a variety of soils and under a wide range of climates. It occur at the Arctic tree line in Canada. It suits hardiness zones 1-8.

## PRODUCTION

### Harvesting and Seed Production

It is slow growing. Trees can live for 200 years.

## NOTES

There are between 30 and 40 species of Picea.

## PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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