PLANT FACT SHEET

Tsuga mertensiana (Bongard) Carriere

GENUS *Tsuga* **FAMILY** Pinaceae

COMMON NAMES Mountain hemlock, Black hemlock, Mountain Hemlock Spruce

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Bark, Oil - flavouring

The inner bark was baked and eaten.
The fresh needles are used as a tea substitute.
Spruce oil is used to flavour candy.

DESCRIPTION

A variable size tree. It is usually 15 m tall and 50 cm across the trunk but can be 45 m tall. It is a low spreading shrub at high altitudes. At lower elevations it has a strongly tapering trunk and branches almost to the ground. The leaves are needle like and single and rounded in cross section. They are 20-30 mm long with blunt tips. Both surfaces are dark bluish-green. The needles are crowded and spread all around the twigs. The seed cones are oblong and 30-80 mm long. They are purplish-brown. The scales are broad and thickened. They are fan shaped. They are rough along the edges. The cones open in autumn and spread widely. The scales bend back.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It grows in the wetter areas of the subalpine forests between 750-1800 m altitude in Canada. It grows best in deep, moist soils on slopes away from the sun. It suits hardiness zones 4-9.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Seed germinate in spring even in snow. Plants can be grown by layering.

NOTES

There are 10 or 11 Tsuga species.

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