

Conifers

CONIFERS KEY

A. Leaves flattened and scale-like—WESTERN REDCEDAR

AA. Leaves needle-like but not in clusters

B. Needles flat with pointed tips, leaving a flat scar on twig; cones with trident shaped bracts; old bark deeply furrowed—DOUGLAR FIR

BB. Needles short, flat, blunt, in flat sprays, appearing two-ranked; cones abundant and small; gracefully down-sweeping branches—WESTERN HEMLOCK

BBB. Needles 4-sided, somewhat flattened, sharp tips, leaving pegs on twig; old bark breaks into scales; 2-3 inch cones with thin, wavy, toothed scales—SITKA SPRUCE

WESTERN REDCEDAR

Thuja plicata

Identification: Large trees with branches that tend to droop slightly and turn up at the ends. Bark tears off in long fibrous strips. Leaves scale-like. Seed cones egg-shaped, 8-12 scales, about ½ inch long.

Location: Along forest service road and higher on the mountain.

Uses: Valuable, easily split, rot-resistant wood used widely by aboriginals and contemporary lumber industry.

[drawing Sudworth p 156]

Western Redcedar



DOUGLAS FIR

Pseudotsuga menziesii

Identification: Very large (up to 300 feet tall!), old bark very thick and fire resistant, ridged and dark brown. Needles with pointed tips, 2 white bands of stomata on lower surface, spirally arranged, leaving small, flat scars on twig upon falling. Seed cones 2-3 inches long with prominent trident shaped bracts extending beyond the scales.

Location: On the mountainside of entrance road and up the hill. Very common.

Uses: A valuable timber tree; wood and pitch widely used by aboriginals.

[drawing Sudworth p. 100]



WESTERN HEMLOCK

Tsuga heterophylla

Identification: Tall tree with drooping leader and gracefully down-sweeping branches; delicate, feathery foliage; twigs roughened by peg-like bases after needles have fallen. Short, flat, blunt needles, irregular spacing and length, appear 2-ranked, 2 fine lines of stomata below. Seed cones numerous and small (1 inch).

Location: Very common throughout Drift Creek forests.

Uses: Tannin was used for tanning hides, a pigment, and cleansing solution. A moderately heavy, durable, and fairly easily carved wood. Used extensively as medicine by most original inhabitants of the Northwest.

[drawing Sudworth p. 92]

Western Hemlock



SITKA SPRUCE

Picea sitchensis

Identification: Stiff, very sharp needles pointing out on all sides of branch (test by grasping carefully!). Seed cones 2-4 inches long with thin, wavy, toothed scales. Largest of all spruces, commonly up to 6 feet in diameter. Enormous buttresses. Hanging slender side branches. May live over 800 years.

Location: The dominant tree on the Drift Creek Camp flood plain. The Sitka spruce near the Yamhill cabin is perhaps ten feet in diameter at breast height, a magnificent specimen.

Uses: See Pojar and MacKinnon p. 37 for an extended description of aboriginal uses such as “protection against evil thoughts”, “scare spectators” at dances, inner bark and shoots eaten, laxative, “medicine for burns, boils, slivers”, “pitch...medicine for gonorrhea, syphilis, colds, sore throats, internal swellings, rheumatism and toothaches”, “hats and baskets” from roots. Very important saw timber.

[drawing Sudworth p 82]

Sitka Spruce

