



Tree of Interest

EASTERN RED CEDAR

Juniperus virginiana

Form- Excurrent (pyramidal) shape, evergreen, aromatic, crown can become irregular due to shading from nearby trees or improper pruning. Can become 40-60' and 2' in diameter.

Description- Bark is reddish brown, thin, and fibrous. Evergreen leaves are scale-like and are on four angled twigs. Cones are 3/8-1/4" blue berry-like, soft and juicy as well as sweetish.

Habitat- Dry uplands, especially limestone, idle farmlands fence rows, sometimes occur in pure stands (Cedar Glades).

Pest and Disease Problems- Cedar apple rust, fungus alternates between Eastern red cedar and mostly apple and crabapple.

Notes- This shade intolerant evergreen is a mainstay of the Tennessee landscape. Many species of wildlife enjoy the berry-like cone which is very noticeable along fence lines and underneath trees where birds act as secondary dispersal vectors. For nearly one hundred years, Tennessee led the pencil industry in the 19th century. Many virgin stands of Eastern Red Cedar, reaching heights of 100' in pure stands, were leveled by the abhorrent "infinite supply" ethic of the pencil industry. While very few of the large trees are left, its ability to propagate on very poor sites and shade intolerance allows the tree to exploit its ecological niche to the fullest becoming one of the first species of trees to dominate idle fields and easements in the area. While disliked by landowners who have to keep up fence lines and pastures, this species has a restorative value for development of pure stands for rare wildlife habitat.

