

## Community Tree Profile:

# Concolor or White Fir

## (*Abies concolor*)

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**Native To:** Southwestern US to northern Mexico

**Mature Height:** 30' to 50' or more

**Spread:** 15' to 30'

**Form:** Pyramidal, rigid form with branches to the base, medium texture

**Growth Rate:** Slow to moderate

**Foliage:** Evergreen, soft, silvery bluish-green needles borne on upper part of branch and curving upwards. Needles are flattened, 1½" to 2½" long, glaucous on both sides, and smell like tangerines when crushed.

**Cones:** Borne erect on top of branches, 3½" to 5" long, cylindrical. Cone disintegrates directly on plant before falling to ground, with the central axis remaining.

**Bark:** Smooth and light gray on young stems becoming thicker and ridged and furrowed on older trunks; ashy gray in color.

**Site Requirements:** Prefers full sun and a moist, well-drained, sandy loam soil; dislikes heavy clay. Will tolerate drier conditions and heat better than other firs.

**Hardiness Zone:** 4a to 7

**Insect & Disease Problems:** None serious

**Suggested Applications:** Concolor fir is an excellent large evergreen tree that can be used as a specimen in residential landscapes and as a replacement for the pest prone Colorado blue spruce. It can also be used as a screen or as a Christmas tree.

**Limitations:** Dislikes poorly drained, heavy clay soils; not very urban tolerant.

**Comments:** Its soft, bluish-gray foliage to the ground, pyramidal form, and greater pest resistance provide

for a low maintenance, multi-season-interest tree.

**Common Cultivars:**

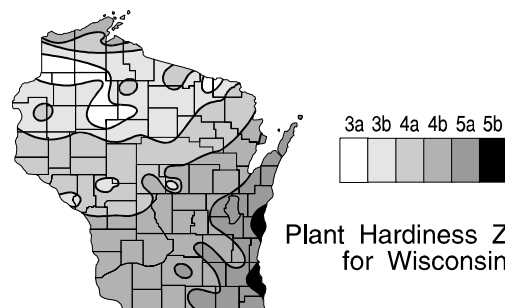
'Candicans' – Has longer, bright, silver-blue needles and narrow, upright form.

'Compacta' – Has an irregular, dwarf, compact, globular to pyramidal form; silver-blue needles; only grows 6' to 10' tall.



Photo by Dr. Laura Jull, UW–Madison

White fir's pyramidal form.



Plant Hardiness Zones for Wisconsin

\* Urban tree size and growth rate vary considerably and are strongly controlled by site conditions.

### References:

**Manual of Woody Landscape Plants: Their Identification, Ornamental Characteristics, Culture, Propagation and Uses**, by Michael A. Dirr, Stipes Publishing, Champaign, IL.

**Landscape Plants for Eastern North America**, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., by Harrison L. Flint, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York.

**Manual of Cultivated Conifers**, by Gerd Krüssmann, Timber Press, Portland, OR.


**The Right Tree Handbook**, by Harold Pellett, Nancy Rose and Mervin Eisel, University of Minnesota Extension Service, St. Paul, MN. 



Photo by Dr. Ed Hasselkus, UW–Madison

The upturned needles of white fir.