

Siberian Larch



Siberian Larch (*Larix sibirica*)

General Description

A large pyramidal deciduous conifer with spreading horizontal branches. Needles are densely clustered on short spurs. Needles turn attractive yellow and are shed each fall. The largest tree in North Dakota is 55 feet tall with a canopy spread of 18 feet.

Leaves and Buds

Bud Arrangement - Spirally on short spurs.

Bud Color - Light brown.

Bud Size - Small, short, pointed, with many brown pointed scales.

Leaf Type and Shape - Needles are borne in clusters on short shoot spurs, singly on long shoots.

Leaf Margins - Smooth.

Leaf Surface - Smooth, soft, flattened.

Leaf Length - 1 to 1½ inches.

Leaf Width - Needles.

Leaf Color - Light green in spring, dark green in summer, yellow in fall, absent in winter.

Flowers and Fruits

Flower Type - Monoecious, separate male and female strobili.

Flower Color - Male are yellow; females are red to green.

Fruit Type - Cones, 1½ to 2 inches, borne upright on the branch, small winged seed.

Fruit Color - Brown cones, yellow-brown seed.

Form

Growth Habit - Spreading lateral branches.

Texture - Medium-fine, summer; medium, winter.

Crown Height - 30 to 60 feet.

Crown Width - 15 to 25 feet.

Bark Color - Dark brown, to grayish-brown, and scaly.

Root System - Root spread is equal to the height of the tree and varies from 1 to 4 feet deep.

Environmental Requirements

Soils

Soil Texture - Intolerant of dry, heavy, shallow, chalky soils.

Soil pH - 5.0 to 7.5.

Windbreak Suitability Group - 1, 3, 5.

Cold Hardiness

USDA Zone 2.

Water

Prefers moist well-drained sites, but trial plantings on dry sites are performing well.

Light

Full sun, intolerant of shade.

Uses

Conservation/Windbreaks

Medium to tall deciduous conifer for farmstead and field windbreaks.

Wildlife

Nesting sites for song birds.

Agroforestry Products

Wood - Rot resistant heartwood for posts, poles, railroad ties, and mine timbers.

Medicinal - Used as a stimulant, diuretic and for control of certain skin diseases.

Urban/Recreational

Good hardy landscape tree for parks, yards and other landscape sites. Yellow fall color is quite striking.

Cultivated Varieties

None

Related Species

American Larch (*Larix laricina*)

European Larch (*L. decidua*)

Western Larch (*L. occidentalis*)

Pests

Melampsora leaf rust is a locally common disease.