

BLACK SPRUCE

Picea mariana (Mill.) B. S. P.

Black spruce occurs in every county except Sagadahoc. It grows on cool upland soils, but is more commonly found along streams, on the borders of swamps and in sphagnum bogs. It grows to a height of 70-90 feet and a diameter of 6 - 18 inches. On a good site, it will grow rapidly. It is the most commonly planted spruce. In sphagnum bogs, trees 50 - 80 years old may be only 6 - 8 feet tall and about one inch in diameter. The branches are short, pendulous and have a tendency to curve up at the ends. It forms an open, irregular crown. The lower branches often touch the ground and form new trees by the natural layering method. The **bark** on the trunk is grayish brown and the surface is broken into thin scales. The **leaves** are $\frac{1}{4}$ - $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, dull blue-green in color,



blunt-pointed, flexible, and soft to the touch.

The **cones** are $\frac{1}{2}$ - $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, ovoid, and become nearly spherical when open. The cone scales are stiff, and have toothed margins. The cones usually stay on the trees for many years. The **twigs** have many hairs, some of which are tipped with glands. The inner bark is olive-green.

The **wood** is soft and light, but strong. It is used for the manufacture of pulp, framing and construction lumber, planking and Christmas trees. Spruce beer is made by boiling the branches.

BLUE SPRUCE

Picea pungens Engelm.

Blue spruce is a native of the Rocky Mountain region, and is frequently planted in the East as a decorative tree. Foliage coloration varies from silvery-blue to blue-green; the intensity of blue varying between individual specimens. The leaves are about one inch long, stiff, very sharp-pointed, and strongly incurved. Cones are oblong, $2\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ inches long, with thin, flexible, notched scales. Selected specimens are usually planted singly, on lawns or in landscape effects, where the color of the foliage and the shape of the tree are of primary importance. Blue spruce will grow on a variety of sites and tolerates a wide range of growing conditions. These factors contribute to its popularity as a favored ornamental species.