

Incense-cedar

A Good Choice for Oregon's Forests



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Cupressaceae—
Cypress or Redwood Family

- Formerly separate families
  - Cypress and Redwood families recently combined
  - Much confusion in common names for genera and species
    - Many called “cedars” but are not
    - Some called “cypress” but are not
    - Some called “pines” but are not
    - Some called “firs” but are not
    - Trees called “redwoods” fall into 3 separate genera
    - Scientific names sometimes used as common names
    - Several genera only have 1 species, but with different names from the genus
- Genera
  - Worldwide: 25-30
    - Species: 110-130
  - N. America: 9
    - Species: ~ 30
- North American genera
  - *Sequoia*, sequoia (redwood)
  - *Sequoiadendron*, giant sequoia
  - *Taxodium*, baldcypress
  - *Cupressus*, cypress
  - *Juniperus*, juniper
  - *Calocedrus*, incense-cedar
  - *Thuja*, thuja (arborvitae)
  - *Chamaecyparis*, white-cedar (false cypress)
  - *Callitropsis*, Alaska-cedar

Calocedrus—incense-cedar

- Species
  - Worldwide: ~3
    - North America and southeast Asia
  - N. America: 1
- Other
  - Formerly grouped with *Libocedrus*
    - Still in many books published before 2000



Calocedrus—incense-cedar

- Leaves
  - Persistent, scale-like, decussate (4 ranked)
  - Typically appressed to twigs
    - Divergent on young, vigorous growth
  - Longer than wide
    - Shaped like wine glass
  - Glandular
    - Aromatic when crushed
  - Flat sprays
    - But twisted







Calocedrus—incense-cedar

- Cones
  - Male
    - Small, terminal, yellow
  - Female
    - 3 pairs of valvate scales
      - But 2 aborted and 2 fused
      - So it looks like 3 scales
    - Leathery
    - About 1” long
    - Shape
      - Closed: duck’s bill
      - Open: flying goose
- Seeds
  - Large
  - Straw colored
  - Long lateral wings











Calocedrus—incense-cedar

- Twigs
  - Young
    - Covered in scale leaves
  - Older
    - Red-brown
    - Scaly
- Bark
  - Young
    - Thin and scaly
  - Mature
    - Thick (3-8”)
    - Yellow-brown to cinnamon
    - Fibrous
    - Deeply furrowed
      - Resembles plates stacked on a shelf





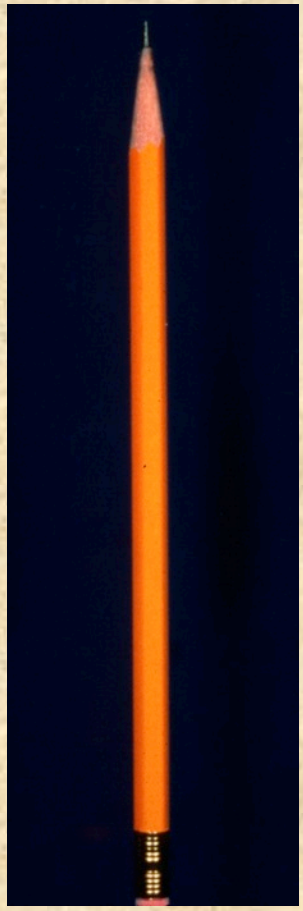






Calocedrus—incense-cedar

- Products
  - Pocket rot limits use for lumber
    - Exterior lumber
    - Wooden pencils
- Uses/values
  - Some use as ornamentals



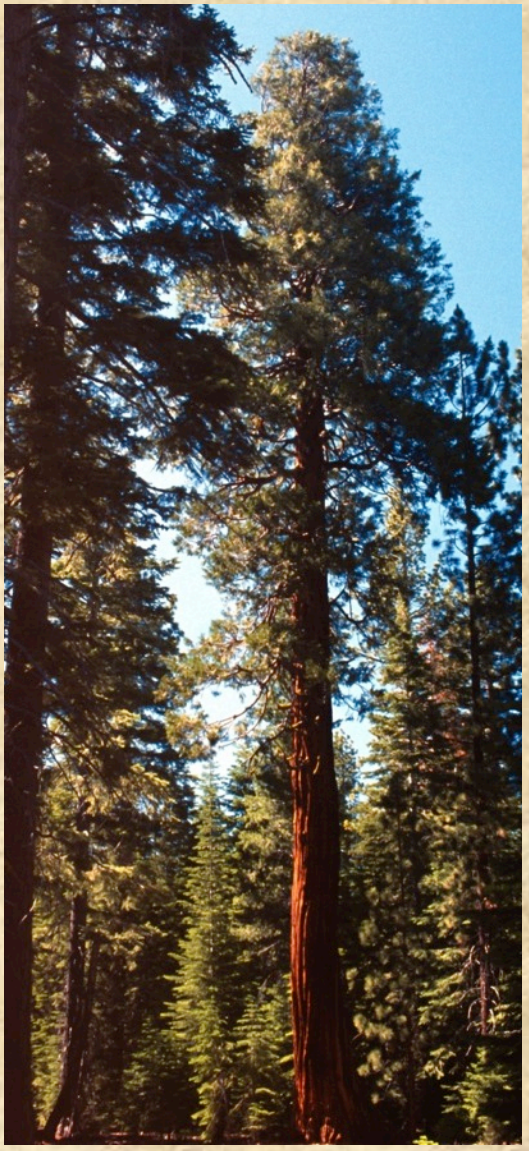


Calocedrus—incense-cedar











Calocedrus—incense-cedar

- N. American species
  - *C. decurrens*, incense-cedar



Important Considerations for Planting:

- prefers moist, well-drained, fertile soil
- full sun or partial shade
- insect and decay resistant, though often impacted by dry rot in the heartwood
- wildlife use it for cover
- great choice for windbreaks to control erosion and protect livestock/crops











For additional information:

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