

# Douglas-fir

PSEUDOTSUGA MENZIESII

Jeri Chase, ODF Public Affairs Specialist

It is Oregon's state tree and best-known conifer. It ranges west of the Cascade Mountains – although it can be found east of those mountains growing among other kinds of trees. It is not a “true fir” – it has the honor of its own genus and actually belongs to the pine family.

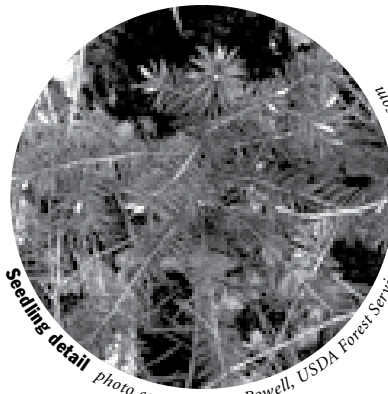
**from the editor:**

“Oregon’s Native Trees” is a new feature in *Forests for Oregon*. If you would like to suggest a tree to feature in upcoming issues, just let us know.

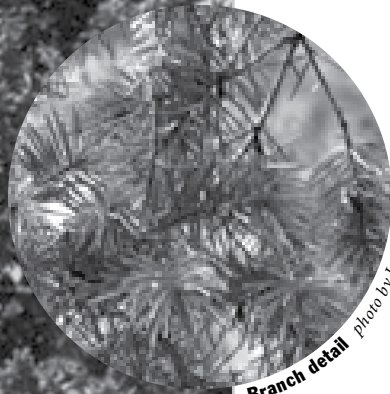




**Cone detail** photo by Jeri Chase, ODF



**Seedling detail** photo courtesy Dave Powell, USDA Forest Service, [www.forestryimages.com](http://www.forestryimages.com)



**Branch detail** photo by Jeri Chase, ODF



**Bark detail** photo courtesy Dave Powell, USDA Forest Service, [www.forestryimages.com](http://www.forestryimages.com)



**The dense wood is very stiff and durable, making it one of the most important and valuable timber trees in the world.**

*photo courtesy Bill Cook, Michigan State University, [www.forestryimages.com](http://www.forestryimages.com)*

A young forest full of this tree's new-green growth symbolizes renewal. The most ambitious re-planting project ever undertaken produced a "sea of green" – more than 72 million of this tree's seedlings planted by Oregonians over 50 years ago creating the Tillamook State Forest. An older forest of these trees seems peaceful – although people unaccustomed to them may describe them as spooky and claustrophobic. And a forest of these trees in all ages seems vibrant and exciting, and is full of life – from the Douglas Squirrel to the legendary Sasquatch.

Our state was built with this tree – families were nurtured by it for generations. Many still are. It is crucial to our economy. In 2004, over 417 million board feet of this softwood was harvested in western Oregon, providing jobs and every-day products we all use, including the highest quality lumber – which Oregon leads the country in producing. It is also the world's most popular Christmas tree – and Oregon's

nurseries lead the nation in Christmas tree production.

The dense wood is stiff and durable, rumored to be stronger than cement. It grows straight and tall – taller than 250 feet and larger than 10 feet in diameter. The "Brummet Fir" state champion grows in southern Oregon – 329 feet tall and 36 feet in circumference.

Native Americans lived among these trees for centuries and used the wood for fuel and to build homes, boiled the bark to heal infections, and made tea from the new growth. Many of Oregon's tribes now manage their own forestlands, and the revenues enable them to offer much-needed services to their people.

Oregon's other state forests are also filled with these trees – the Clatsop, Santiam, Elliott – even some in the southwest corner of the Sun Pass. Forests of these trees are some of the most popular recreation areas in the state.

It is the **Douglas-fir**, and there is no other tree like it. Visit one of Oregon's forests today and find out why. 🌲