



## Oregon's native conifers

Oregon is home to a large number of cone-bearing trees. Roughly 30 species are native in some part of the state, making Oregon second only to California as the state with the most native conifer species.

The official state tree, Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), is the state's most abundant conifer, dominating forests west of the Cascades.



Above: The distinctive cone of Douglas-fir, Oregon's state tree.

By contrast, a number of California species reach their northernmost limits in southwest Oregon and can be found in only a few places. This includes a grove in Curry County of the world's tallest tree species the coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*). Oregon is the only other place outside California where these imposing trees are found in nature.

Most Oregon conifers belong to the large pine family (Pinaceae), which includes the hemlocks, true firs, spruces, Douglas-fir and pines. The true cedars of the Old World are also in that family. Many Oregon trees commonly called cedars are members of the cypress family (Cupressaceae). Among these are incense cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*), Port Orford cedar (*Chamaecyparis law-*

*soniana*), western red-cedar (*Thuja plicata*) and Alaska yellow-cedar (*Callitropsis nootkatensis*).

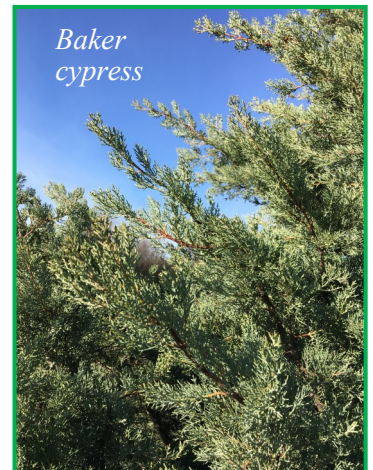
Below: Oregon's incense cedar is in the cypress family.



Conifer species of one kind or another have adapted to almost every climate and soil in Oregon's diverse geography. In coastal regions drenched by rain and lashed by storms grow stunted shore pine and soaring Sitka spruce. Inland, hemlocks survive in the dense

shade of mature forests. In the snowy Cascades can be found true firs, mountain hemlock and mountain spruce. At treeline, whitebark pines endure long winters and blasting winds. In drier regions, ponderosa pine dominates, giving way in desert areas to western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*).

Many conifers are well adapted to frequent, low-intensity wildfires, particularly in eastern and southern Oregon. The thick bark of mature ponderosa pine helps them survive low ground fires. Species like Baker cypress (*Hesperocyparis bakeri*) even need fire to open their cones. In cities, evergreen conifers are valued for slowing rainfall runoff all year long.





Common name	Latin name
Alaska yellow-cedar	<i>Callitropsis nootkatensis</i>
Baker cypress	<i>Hesperocyparis bakeri</i> syn. <i>Cupressus bakeri</i>
Coast redwood	<i>Sequoia sempervirens</i>
Incense cedar	<i>Calocedrus decurrens</i>
MacNab cypress	<i>Hesperocyparis macnabiana</i> syn. <i>Cupressus macnabiana</i>
Port Orford cedar	<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>
Western juniper	<i>Juniperus occidentalis</i>
Western red-cedar	<i>Thuja plicata</i>
<b>DOUGLAS FIR</b>	
Douglas-fir	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>
<b>TRUE FIRS</b>	
California red fir	<i>Abies magnifica</i>
Grand fir	<i>Abies grandis</i>
Noble fir	<i>Abies procera</i>
Pacific silver fir	<i>Abies amabilis</i>
Subalpine fir	<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i>
White fir	<i>Abies concolor</i>
<b>HEMLOCKS</b>	
Mountain hemlock	<i>Tsuga mertensiana</i>
Western hemlock	<i>Tsuga heterophylla</i>
<b>SPRUCES</b>	
Brewer spruce	<i>Picea breweriana</i>
Engelmann spruce	<i>Picea engelmannii</i>
Sitka spruce	<i>Picea sitchensis</i>

Common name	Latin name
<b>PINES</b>	
Gray pine	<i>Pinus sabiniana</i>
Jeffrey pine	<i>Pinus jeffreyi</i>
Knobcone pine	<i>Pinus attenuata</i>
Limber pine	<i>Pinus flexilis</i>
Lodgepole pine	<i>Pinus contorta</i> ssp. <i>latifolia</i>
Ponderosa pine	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i>
Shore pine	<i>Pinus contorta</i> ssp. <i>contorta</i>
Sugar pine	<i>Pinus lambertiana</i>
Western white pine	<i>Pinus monticola</i>
Whitebark pine	<i>Pinus albicaulis</i>
<b>YEW</b>	
Pacific yew	<i>Taxus brevifolia</i>



**Right:** A ponderosa pine reaches into the blue sky of eastern Oregon, where it is the main forest tree species.



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