

Colorado Blue Spruce

Picea pungens var. *glauca* (Family: *Pinaceae*)

Description: *Picea pungens* var. *glauca* is a medium sized evergreen tree native to the Rocky Mountains from Montana to New Mexico. It is a popular specimen for landscape use due its blue-green color.

Hardiness: USDA hardiness zones 3 to 7.

Natural Habitat: Native to the Rocky Mountains.

Mature Size: Height: 30' to 60', Spread: 10' to 20'

Form (Shape): Dense, regular, narrow to broad pyramid with horizontal, stiff branches to the ground.

Growth Rate: Slow to medium rate, growing 30-50' in 35-50 years.

Foliage: Gray-green to blue-green needles. Young growth is a soft, silvery blue gray. Needles spread around the stem, and are stout, rigid, incurved, prickly, .75-1.25" long, and 4 sided with 6 stomatal lines on each side.

Texture: Medium to coarse.

Flowers: Monoecious. Staminate is orange, and pistillate is greenish or purple.

Fruit: Produces cones that are oblong, cylindrical, short-stalked, 2-4" long, and 1-1.25" wide.

Light: Full sun.

Soil: Rich, moist, well-drained soil. Can withstand some drought.

Propagation: Seeds require no pretreatment.

Failure Patterns: Failure is common especially when planted outside native zone.

Disease and Insects: Subject to spruce gall aphid, spruce budworm, and spider mites.

Landscape Use: Popular as a specimen, though hard to combine well with other species. Can be used in groupings.

Availability: Many cultivars available in the retail nurseries.