

Plant Profiles: HORT 2242 Landscape Plants II

Botanical Name: *Pinus resinosa*

Common Name: red pine

Family Name: Pinaceae – pine family

General Description: *Pinus resinosa* is a rugged pine capable of withstanding extremes in heat and cold. Native to North America, the Chicago region is on the southern edge of its range where it is reported only in Lake and LaSalle counties. Red pine does best on dry, sandy, infertile soils. Although red pine has ornamental features, it is not often used in the landscape. There are a few unique cultivars that may be of use in specialty gardens or landscapes.

Zone: 2-5

Resources Consulted:

Dirr, Michael A. *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants: Their Identification, Ornamental Characteristics, Culture, Propagation and Uses*. Champaign: Stipes, 2009. Print.

"The PLANTS Database." *USDA, NRCS*. National Plant Data Team, Greensboro, NC 27401-4901 USA, 2014. Web. 21 Jan. 2014.

Swink, Floyd, and Gerould Wilhelm. *Plants of the Chicago Region*. Indianapolis: Indiana Academy of Science, 1994. Print.

Creator: Julia Fitzpatrick-Cooper, Professor, College of DuPage

Creation Date: 2014

Keywords/Tags: Pinaceae, tree, conifer, cone, needle, evergreen, *Pinus resinosa*, red pine



Whole plant/Habit:

- Description: When young, *Pinus resinosa* has the typical pyramidal shape of most pines. When open grown, as in this image, the branches develop lower on the trunk creating a dense crown. Notice the foliage is concentrated in dense tufts at the tips of the branches. This is characteristic of red pine.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: September 27, 2010
- Image File Name: red_pine_2104.png



Whole plant/Habit:

- Description: *Pinus resinosa* is often planted in groves to serve as a windbreak. In this situation the crown is high on tall, straight trunks but still has the characteristic dense tufts of foliage at the end of the branches.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: October 12, 2010
- Image File Name: red_pine_1210705.png



Bark:

- Description: The bark is gray/brown with scaly patches of pinkish red showing through. This characteristic pinkish gray color can be an identification feature when used in conjunction with needle features.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: September 7, 2008
- Image File Name: red_pine_3683.png



Branch/twig:

- Description: Red pine often has branches too high in the tree to see needle/stem/twig features up close. However, as this picture illustrates, the concentration of tufts of needles at the end of the branches is a good identification feature.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: November 11, 2010
- Image File Name: red_pine_1230018.png



Cone:

- Description: The light brown cones are small, only 2 inches long by 1-2 inches wide. They are attached sessile to the stem either single or in clusters of two and are horizontally spreading or “sticking out” from the stem.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: October 9, 2008
- Image File Name: red_pine_0642.png



Bud:

- Description: The bud is about ½ inch long, slightly resinous, with a few scales reflexed or loose. Bud is not an overly useful identification tool. In this image the bud is the pointed structure in the middle. It is surrounded by immature female cones.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: September 27, 2010
- Image File Name: red_pine_2099.png



Flower:

- Description: Though not true flowers the reproductive structures on pines are often referred to as such. Pines are monoecious; producing male pollen cones (on left) and separate female seed cones (on right) all on the same plant. Male pollen cones are clustered at the base of new growth. Female cones form near the tip of new growth. The color phases can vary according to species. Note: This photo is meant to show general images for “flowers”. The images are not from the same pine species and may not be of the same species referenced in this Plant Profile.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: Early June
- Image File Name: pinus_flower-00.png



Leaf Number/Attachment:

- Description: *Pinus resinosa* is a two-needle pine. The needles persist for only 4 years and are clustered near the end of the branches. The 5-6 inch needles are thin, soft, and snap in half when bent. This is a great identification feature and fun to do!
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: February 26, 2006
- Image File Name: red_pine_0074.png



Leaf Number/Attachment:

- Description: The bundle sheath, at 5/8 - 7/8 inches, is considered long. Think of these as "knee socks" compared to the "ankle socks" of other 2-needle pines. The purple structures in this image are young immature female cones. It is common for cones on pines to go through a brief purple/red color phase; it is not unique to red pine.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: June 4, 2006
- Image File Name: red_pine_2245.png



Winter interest:

- Description: The tall straight trunk with pinkish gray bark and soft tufts of needles concentrated near the end of the branches are useful identification features and add a touch of color to the winter landscape.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: October 12, 2010
- Image File Name: red_pine_1210705s.png

**Special ID feature(s):**

- The needles snapping in half when bent is an excellent identification tool. If you can reach a branch bend a needle and it will snap. Other pine needles do not do this unless, of course, you try this on an extremely cold day!
- Image Source: Karren Weisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: January 16, 2014
- Image File Name: red_pine_5463.png