

# BALSAM FIR (*Abies Balsamea*)



<p><b>A. Identification:</b>          ---regular crown which gradually tapers to a spiral like top</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>leaves</b>--needle-like, short, flat and 1 to 1.5 cm long</li> <li>• <b>flowers</b>--yellowish red tinged with 3mm long purple are the male flowers          --female flowers are 2 to 3 cm long and purplish in color at the crown</li> <li>• <b>cones</b>---roundish, perched upright on year old branches in the crown</li> <li>• <b>bark</b>----grayish, smooth with age breaking into irregular, brownish scales</li> <li>• <b>wood</b>----light, soft, weak, somewhat brittle; odorless          ----white wood with little contrast between early wood, latewood or the heartwood and sapwood</li> </ul>
<p><b>B. Distribution and Location:</b>          ---in Canada it is found from Newfoundland and Labrador, in northern portions of Quebec and Ontario, scattered stands are in Manitoba and Saskatchewan to northern Alberta          ---then stands can be found for 640 km to central Alberta</p>
<p><b>C. Climate:</b>          ---grows best in eastern part of south east Canada because this area has cool temperatures and lots of moisture</p>
<p><b>D. Habitat:</b>          ---adaptable to a variety of soils and climates          ---grows in pure stands or mixed with trembling aspen, white birch, and white and black spruce</p>
<p><b>E. Growing characteristics:</b>          ---medium-sized trees which grow up to 25 m tall, 70 cm in diameter and 150 years old</p>
<p><b>F. Reproduction:</b>          ---by seed</p>
<p><b>G. Uses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) <b>modern</b>---resin is used to produce Canada balsam          ---primarily used in pulp and lumber industry          ---used a lot for Christmas trees in certain parts of Canada</li> <li>ii) <b>traditional</b>---used as a cold remedy          ---its glue is used for glass and optical instrument component          ---wood is used for paper manufacturing</li> </ul>
<p><b>H. Fun Facts:</b>          ---wildlife need this tree for food and shelter          ---this fir tree has been a favorite Christmas tree for more than 400 years</p>

**Bibliography:**

Trees in Canada by John Laird Farrar pages 84-85

[http://www.fireevergreen.com/types of trees/balsam fir/](http://www.fireevergreen.com/types%20of%20trees/balsam%20fir/)

<http://www.taylortrees.com/Christmas%20Tree%20Descriptions.htm>

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[http://www.na.fs.fed.us/pubs/silvics manual/volume 1 abies/balsamea.htm](http://www.na.fs.fed.us/pubs/silvics%20manual/volume%201%20abies/balsamea.htm)