Shortleaf Pine

Pinus echinata



Shortleaf Pine
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 60 feet

Spread: 35 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 6

Other Names: Short Leaf Pine, Short-leaved Pine

Description:

A medium-sized, fast growing native pine with a short, conical crown that broadens with age; features dark bluish-green needles, and attractive reddish-brown bark in scaly plates on mature trees; tolerates a wide range of soils

Ornamental Features

Shortleaf Pine is primarily valued in the landscape for its distinctively pyramidal habit of growth. It has attractive bluish-green evergreen foliage. The needles are highly ornamental and remain bluish-green throughout the winter. The brown fruits are held in cones from late summer to early fall. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up. The shaggy brick red bark is extremely showy and adds significant winter interest.

Landscape Attributes

Shortleaf Pine is an evergreen tree with a strong central leader and a distinctive and refined pyramidal form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This tree will require occasional maintenance and upkeep. When pruning is necessary, it is recommended to only trim back the new growth of the current season, other than to remove any dieback. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Shortleaf Pine is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade

Planting & Growing

Shortleaf Pine will grow to be about 60 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 35 feet. It has a high canopy with a typical clearance of 7 feet from the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. As it matures, the lower branches of this tree can be strategically removed to create a high enough canopy to support unobstructed human traffic underneath. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 60 years or more.

This tree should only be grown in full sunlight. It prefers dry to average moisture levels with very well-drained soil, and will often die in standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in sandy soils. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided. This species is native to parts of North America.