

Sierra Juniper

Sierra Juniper



Latin (group) name: Juniperus

Latin (specific) name: Juniperus Occidentalis (Hooker)

Average max height: 40' to 80'

Average diameter: 16" to 40"

Associated state: none

Category: American Woods

The Softwoods - Conifers

[Wood Research](#)

The Tree

The Sierra Juniper, long known as Western Juniper, or merely Juniper, is, when not suppressed by environment, bent or twisted on rocks and steep mountain sides, a sturdy grizzly of the high altitudes ranging in size from 40 to 80 feet high with a trunk diameter of from 16 to 40 inches. It is a slow-growing, long-lived tree. The crown is open and well-rounded but the limbs may extend almost to the ground. The trunk is chunky with straight grooves and ridges, is sometimes twisted and bent, has long strong roots, and frequently divides into huge upright limbs a few feet from the base. The bark, which is firm and stringy, is about one-half to one and one-half inches thick, and a clear light-cinnamon-brown in color. The evergreen leaves, a pale ashy-green color, are short, scale-like, cling closely to the still twigs, and overlap one another in groups of three. On the younger trees the leaves are stiff and sharp. The leaf is peculiar in that on the

back of each is a glandular pit filled with a whitish resin which, when crushed, gives off an aromatic pungent odor. The leaf juice is sometimes used for medicinal purposes. The “berries” which are blue-black in color covered with a whitish bloom, have a tough skin and are slightly more than one-quarter inch in diameter. They mature the second year. Indians and birds relish these berries which are sweetish and have a pungently aromatic odor.



Sierra Juniper Tree Bark



Sierra Juniper Berries

Common Names in Use

- Sierra Juniper (Calif.)
- Cedar (Idaho)
- Juniper (Oreg., Calif., Idaho)
- Western Cedar (Idaho)
- Western Juniper (Calif., lit.)
- Western Red Cedar
- Yellow Cedar (Mont.)

Growth Range

The growth range of Sierra Juniper extends from southern Washington and Idaho southward through Oregon and California. The tree favors exposed slopes, canyon sides and the rocky soils of mountain regions in the higher elevations, widely distributed from 2,000 to 10,000 feet above sea level.

The Wood

Like other Junipers, the wood is fine grained, aromatic, soft, brittle and splits easily. The heartwood is a pale brown or tan tinged with purplish red, and the sapwood is very thin and nearly white. It works very well with tools and takes a fine finish. Juniper wood closely resembles cedar but is finer grained. It has very attractive coloring, and is enhanced by the many solid knots which occur.



Western Juniper by Hough



























Juniper Jewelry Box

Uses

Because of its short, stocky trunk not a great deal of usable lumber may be cut from it. However, it is comparable with other junipers and cedars for lead pencil stock, and is used for posts and fuel. The wood would make excellent material for wooden novelties because of its grain, color, workability and finishing qualities.

File References

ID	T	Name	Size	Last modified	Actions
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 384	Juniperus Occidentalis (Hooker) <i>Juniperus occidentalis</i> subsp. <i>australis</i> , below Lake Aloha, Tahoe Rim Trail, California-Nevada border. Attribution: Brewbooks at Flickr [CC BY-SA 2.0] (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/) Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Juniperus_occidentalis_australis_Tahoe1.jpg	486.99 KB	02-16-2019	  
 382	Sierra Juniper Tree Bark <i>Juniperus occidentalis</i> var. <i>australis</i> , eastern Sierra Nevada, Rock Creek Canyon, California. Attribution: Wilson44691 [Public domain] Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:JuniperBark.JPG	220.34 KB	02-15-2019	  
 385	Sierra Juniper Berries Common juniper var. <i>depressa</i> berries (<i>Juniperus communis</i> var. <i>depressa</i>), Unorganized Algoma (Kincaid Twp.), Ontario Attribution: Fungus Guy [CC BY-SA 3.0] (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/) Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Common_juniper_berries_(Mica_B).JPG	146.89 KB	02-16-2019	  
 386	168. Juniperus Occidentalis, Hook. Plate No. 168 <i>Juniperus Occidentalis</i> cross section plate. Reference: An Index to "The American Woods" by Romeyn B. Hough. https://www.lib.ncsu.edu/specialcollections/forestry/hough/toc.html . Accessed 17 Feb. 2019.	277.45 KB	02-16-2019	  
 387	Juniper Jewelry Box Western Juniper jewelry box by unknown maker. Reference: Forestry, Oregon Department of. Juniper Jewelry Box. 15 Dec. 2014. Flickr, https://www.flickr.com/photos/oregondepartmentofforestry/17259000831/ .	412.97 KB	02-16-2019	  
 381	Sierra Juniper Range Map Range map of <i>Juniperus occidentalis</i> Dark green: <i>Juniperus occidentalis</i> subsp. <i>occidentalis</i> Light green: <i>Juniperus occidentalis</i> subsp. <i>australis</i> Attribution: By U.S. Geological Survey - Digital representation of "Atlas of United States Trees" by Elbert L. Little, Jr., Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=22087760 Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Juniperus_occidentalis_range_map.jpg	127.15 KB	02-15-2019	  

Bibliography

Shelley E. Schoonover (American Woods) 1951 (Watling & Co.) Santa Monica, CA

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