

Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia **Lodgepole Pine**



Description & Garden Usefulness

Height – 30-50' (80')

Spread – 10-25'

Fall & Winter Color – evergreen

Estimated Kc/Ks: Low, 25-50% of ET_o

Growth rate – slow, ~4"/season

Form/Habit – pyramidal in landscape & open areas, slender and often crowded in forests.

Canopy Density – dense

Texture – medium-coarse

Utility/Value – Lumber, high elevation evergreen, screening, etc.

Altitude – native 6,000-9,300' (11,000')

USDA Hardiness – 3-5

Culture

Best in cool, moist, gritty well drained soil. Does poorly in hot or wet conditions. Various pine beetles and pine scales are pests.

Biology

Nativity & Habitat – Rocky Mountains from Alaska to Colorado. Native, climax species in much of the montane or lower subalpine zones in the mountains of northern and central Colorado. Associated with: Canada Buffaloberry, Curl-leaf Mountain. Mahogany, Bitterbrush, Common Juniper, Huckleberry, etc.

Wildlife – slightly browsed by deer. Seeds of little value to wildlife because the cones do not open until exposed to the extreme heat of a fire.

Taxonomic notes – Pacific Coastal populations belong to var. *contorta* Loud.

Derivation – *contorta* – twisted or contorted, alluding to the form of “shore pines”; *latifolia* – broad-leaved

Synonyms – Black Pine, Tamarack Pine

Comments: The nuts and bark of several pines have been used as a subsistence or emergency food around the world. The author knows of one pine species whose young shoots are poisonous.ⁱ

State Record – 8e ft tall x 35 ft wide, , CO

ⁱ Fernald, M.L. & A.C. Kinsey, *Edible Wild Plants of Eastern North America*, Idlewild Press: Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY, 1943.