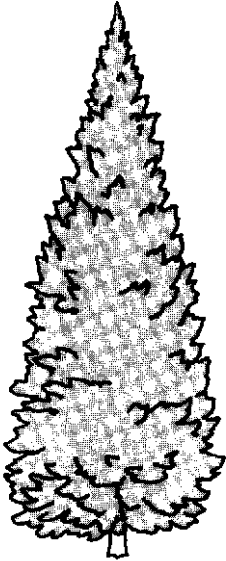


# *Abies concolor* - White Fir or Concolor Fir (*Pinaceae*)

*Abies concolor* is a slow-growing, stately evergreen conifer tree characterized by a bluish or silvery-gray cast and soft needles. Because White Fir is one of the few Firs that can tolerate some drought, it may serve as an alternative bluish conifer to the overused Colorado Blue Spruce (*Picea pungens* var. *glauca*).

## FEATURES



### Form

- medium-sized evergreen tree
- matures at 40' tall x 15' wide in the constructed landscape
- upright pyramidal to upright columnar growth habit, with a layered branching pattern when young
- slow growth rate

### Culture

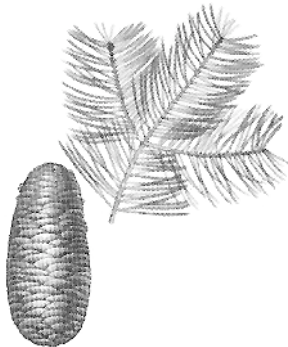
- full sun to partial sun
- prefers moist sandy-loam rich soils that are well-drained, but is somewhat adaptable to poor soils; heavy clay should be

avoided or at least thoroughly amended with organic matter

- should be planted in the spring
- few diseases or pests
- moderately available in the trade

### Foliage

- flattened evergreen needles; bluish-green (spring and summer) to grayish-green (autumn and winter); curve upward above the stem plane, generally organized in 2 rows on each side of the stem; look like a "bow tie"
- needles up to 2" long; they feel soft when a branchlet is grabbed with the hand
- needle scars are smooth and nearly sessile



### Flowers

- purplish-red strobili, but often unnoticed

### Fruits

- upright cones about 5" long, pale green with a deep purplish cast, changing to brown at maturity.
- Fleeting but dramatic ornamental value.

### Twigs

- off-white smooth stems change to light gray with age

### Trunk

- thick gray ridges and furrows with age, often unnoticed since the tree is frequently allowed to remain branched to the ground

## USAGE

### Function

- usually a specimen or focal point tree, but it can also be a slow-growing evergreen screen when used in a group or row planting

### Texture

- medium texture at maturity (bold texture in youth unless sheared)
- thick density at maturity (open density in youth unless sheared)

### Assets

- one of the best Firs in terms of drought and heat tolerance
- evergreen tree with gray-green or blue-green foliage
- symmetrical form

### Liabilities

- slow growth
- like most Firs or Spruces, it can exhibit dieback during severe summer droughts (but it usually does not do this except sometimes during transplant re-establishment)

### Habitat

- Zones 3 to 7
- Native to the Western U.S., especially in the Rocky Mountains



## SELECTIONS

### Alternates

- narrowleaf evergreen trees, especially those with a bluish-green to silvery-blue cast (*Abies fraseri*, *Cedrus atlantica*, *Juniperus scopulorum* 'Wichita Blue', *Picea pungens* f. *glauca*, *Picea omorika*, *Pinus flexilis* 'Vanderwolf's Pyramid', etc.)

### Cultivars - Variants - Related Species

- Abies concolor* 'Candicans' - glaucous blue-white needles gives this cultivar a lighter, more silvery color. Tends to look quite straggly in youth, but fills in nicely over time.