**Picea abies** - Norway Spruce  *(Pinaceae)*

*Picea abies* is a common, large, pyramidal evergreen tree that serves as a bold accent or windbreak in the landscape. Norway Spruce is also available in dwarf and weeping forms that can be used for architectural and accent elements in the landscape.

**FEATURES**

**Form**
- Large evergreen tree; 80' tall x 30' wide
- Upright pyramidal, becoming conical with age
- Somewhat horizontal secondary branches and pendulous branchlets
- Medium rate

**Culture**
- Full sun
- Prefers a moist, acid, well-drained soil but can tolerate adverse conditions, as long as it is not placed in wet soils or shady sites
- Virtually no disease or pest problems
- Abundantly available in B&B form
- Young trees are usually sheared during nursery production for a fuller, denser appearance at transplanting, as the young tree is naturally very open in its branching habit
- Recovers quickly from transplant shock; it is a dependable favorite for screen or windbreak plantings, which are often neglected (and for all practical purposes not watered except by rain and snow) after transplanting
- Trees of 4-10' size should be staked for 2 yrs. after transplanting to prevent windthrow

**Foliage**
- Dark green needles to 1" long
- Clustered on the upper two-thirds of the stem, with the needles pointing forward and therefore "soft" to the grip of the hand around the stem

**Flowers**
- Inconspicuous
- Monoecious

**Fruits/Cones**
- Cones to 5" long, in the upper one-third of the tree
- Light green with a purplish cast when immature, becoming brown with maturity

**Twigs**
- Light brown with an orange cast
- Needle scars raised on the stem

**Trunk**
- Thick gray scales with age

**USAGE**

**Function**
- Specimen, shade, or focal point tree
- Windbreak when in rows
- Large evergreen pyramidal tree

**Texture**
- Bold texture throughout its life and thick density at maturity (fine texture in youth if sheared, thin density in youth if unsheared)

**Assets**
- Evergreen tree with a classical alpine shape
- Large evergreen tree with a medium growth rate
- Branches to the ground
- Pendulous branchlets give a reverse vertical effect

**Liabilities**
- Can exhibit decline and dieback under severe heat and drought stress

**Habitat**
- Zones 2 to 7
- Native to Northern and Central Europe

**SELECTIONS**

**Alternates**
- Large evergreen conifers that are used as specimens, screens, or windbreaks in sunny sites (*Abies concolor, Picea pungens, Pinus strobus, Pseudotsuga menziesii*, etc.)

**Cultivars - Variants - Related species**
- *P. abies* ‘Nidiformis’ - Bird's Nest Spruce - Small shrub to 3' x 3' with an extremely slow growth rate; medium green with a depressed center in the top of the shrub (therefore resembling a "bird's nest"); this trait may be lost with age; full sun; as a foundation, specimen, or facer shrub; one of the most common small narrowleaf shrubs
- *P. abies* ‘Pumila’ - Dwarf Norway Spruce - A miniature shrub similar in appearance to ‘Nidiformis’, except that the foliage is dark green, thinner, and more forward-pointing, with a slightly more vigorous growth rate
- *P. abies* f. *pendula* - Weeping Norway Spruce - Weeping form to 20' tall; useful as a specimen small tree
- *Picea omorika* - Serbian Spruce - 50' x 25'; similar in growth habit to Norway Spruce, but branches are more alpine (ski-sloped) than Norway, stature is shorter, and the foliage is silvery-blue at the branch tips but bluish-green otherwise; superior drought tolerance to Colorado Spruce