

## Guide To Identification of Conifers at Crystal Lakes

This guide will help you identify conifers native to Crystal Lakes. To use this guide closely examine your trees and follow these steps:

1. Count how many needles in a "bundle" (growing from the same location on the twig)
2. Measure length of needles
3. Measure length of cone
4. Note unique characteristics such as:
  - needles – blunt or scale like
  - needles – flat, square, round or twisted
  - cones – upright or hanging
  - berries – one or two seeded
  - tree shape from a distance

### I. Needles, single (not bundled with others)

#### Colorado Blue Spruce:

- Needles very stiff and sharp pointed, four-sided, leave grate-like stubson twig when missing
- Cones hang down and are usually over 3 inches with parchment-like scales
- Twig surface of current year's growth smooth and free of fine hairs



#### Engelmann Spruce:

- Needles are four-sided, leave grate-like stubs on twig when missing, not as stiff as blue spruce, disagreeable odor when crushed
- Cones hang down and are less than 2 inches long with parchment-like scales
- Twig surface of current year's growth has fine hairs



### **Douglas- fir:**

- Needles 1 inch long, slightly twisted at base, leave small raised scars on twigs when missing
- Cones hang down and are 2 to 2½ inches long with three-pronged tongues between cone scales



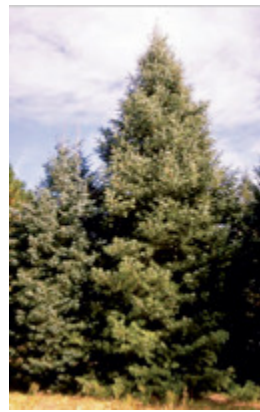
### **Subalpine Fir:**

- Needles 1 to 1¾ inches long; leave flat round scars on twigs when missing, and tend to turn upward from bottom of branch giving appearance of needles growing from one side of branch
- Cones 2 to 4 inches long; purple and upright on top of branches; disintegrate upon maturity
- Tree spire like



### **White Fir:**

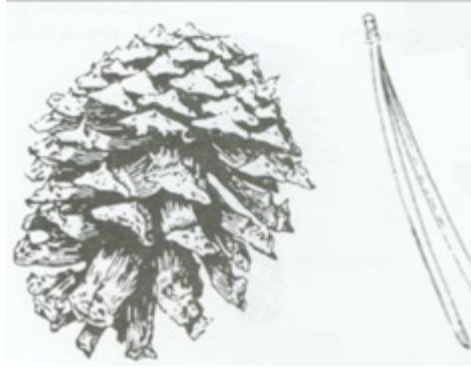
- Needles  $1\frac{3}{4}$  to 3 inches long; leave flat round scars on twigs when missing, and tend to turn upward from bottom of branch giving appearance of needles growing from only one side of branch
- Cones 3 to 5 inches long; yellow to greenish-purple, upright on tops of branches, disintegrate upon maturity
- Tree not spire-like



## **II. Needles, 2 in a bundle**

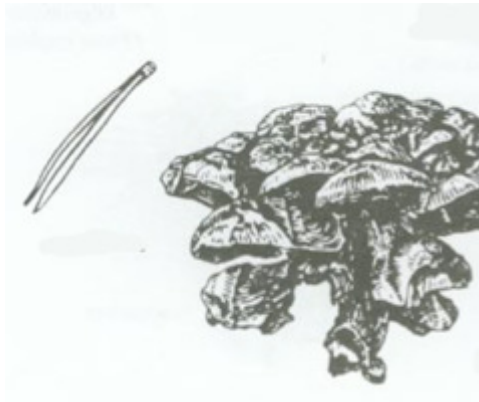
### **Lodgepole Pine:**

- Cones  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 inches long cling to tree unopened for many years, small seeds when opened



### **Pinyon Pine:**

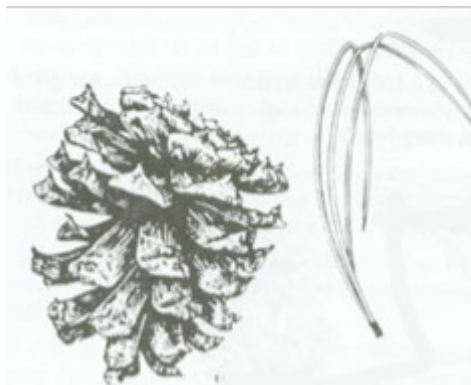
- Needles  $\frac{3}{4}$  to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches long
- Cones 1 to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches long, open readily in fall, large seeds



### **III. Needles, 2 or 3 in a bundle**

#### **Ponderosa Pine:**

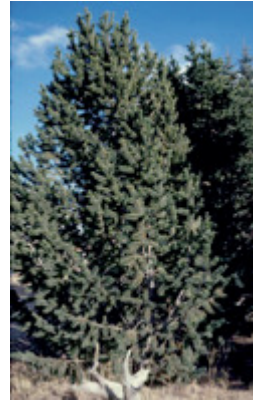
- Needles 3 to 7 inches long
- Cones 3 to 5 inches long, scales armed with spines



## IV. Needles, 5 in a bundle

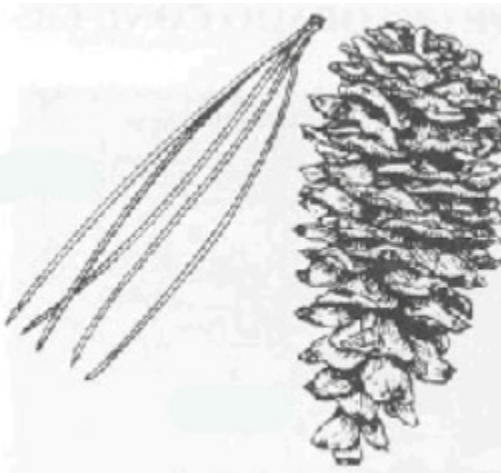
Bristlecone Pine:

- Needles 1 to 1½ inches long with tiny white specks of pitch
- Cones approximately 3 inches, each scale tipped with long, curved, sharp bristle



**Limber Pine:**

- Needles 1½ to 3 inches long, flexible and almost silky
- Cones 3 to 10 inches long with no prickles
- Branches bend readily without breaking



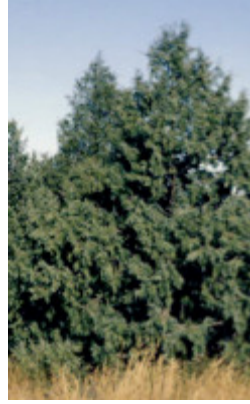
## V. Needles, single, scale-like

Rocky Mountain Juniper (2 seeds per berry, 2 years to mature)

Utah Juniper (1 seed per berry, 2 years to mature)

One Seed Juniper (1 seed per berry, 1 year to mature)

- Needles about 1/16 inch long, reduced to small green scales which make the twigs prickly
- Cones are small bluish berries
- Bushy shape, often found with pinyon pine



The above information was obtained from the Colorado State Forest Service; see [http://csfs.colostate.edu/pdfs/landowner\\_g4thin\\_scr.pdf](http://csfs.colostate.edu/pdfs/landowner_g4thin_scr.pdf), and [http://csfs.colostate.edu/pdfs/tree\\_cards.pdf](http://csfs.colostate.edu/pdfs/tree_cards.pdf) for additional information.