



## *Thuja plicata* 'Fastigiata' 'Fastigiata' Giant Arborvitae<sup>1</sup>

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson<sup>2</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

A native western North American tree, Giant-Cedar can reach 180 to 200 feet in height in some areas of the Northwest but is more often seen at 50 to 70 feet in height with a spread of 15 to 20 feet (Fig. 1). Forming a narrow pyramidal or columnar silhouette with strongly horizontal branches, Giant-Cedar is an evergreen with fragrant, dark green, delicate needles which generously clothe the branches, casting dense shade beneath the tree. The insignificant yellow flowers are followed by small, half-inch cones which seem a little out-of-place on such a large tree. 'Fastigiata' ('Hogan'), has a dense columnar silhouette, and is reportedly very resistant to bagworms compared to the species.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Scientific name:** *Thuja plicata* 'Fastigiata'  
**Pronunciation:** THOO-yuh ply-KAY-tuh  
**Common name(s):** 'Fastigiata' Giant Arborvitae, 'Fastigiata' Giant-Cedar, 'Fastigiata' Western Redcedar  
**Family:** *Cupressaceae*  
**USDA hardiness zones:** 6 through 8A (Fig. 2)  
**Origin:** native to North America  
**Uses:** hedge; recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; screen; specimen; no proven urban tolerance  
**Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree

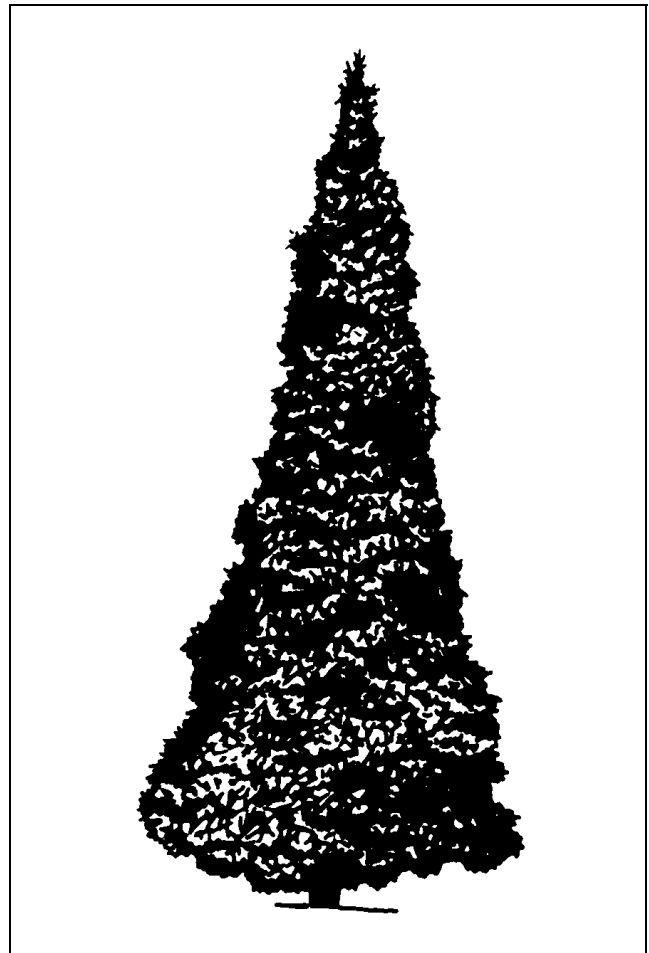


Figure 1. Mature 'Fastigiata' Giant Arborvitae.

### DESCRIPTION

**Height:** 50 to 70 feet  
**Spread:** 15 to 20 feet

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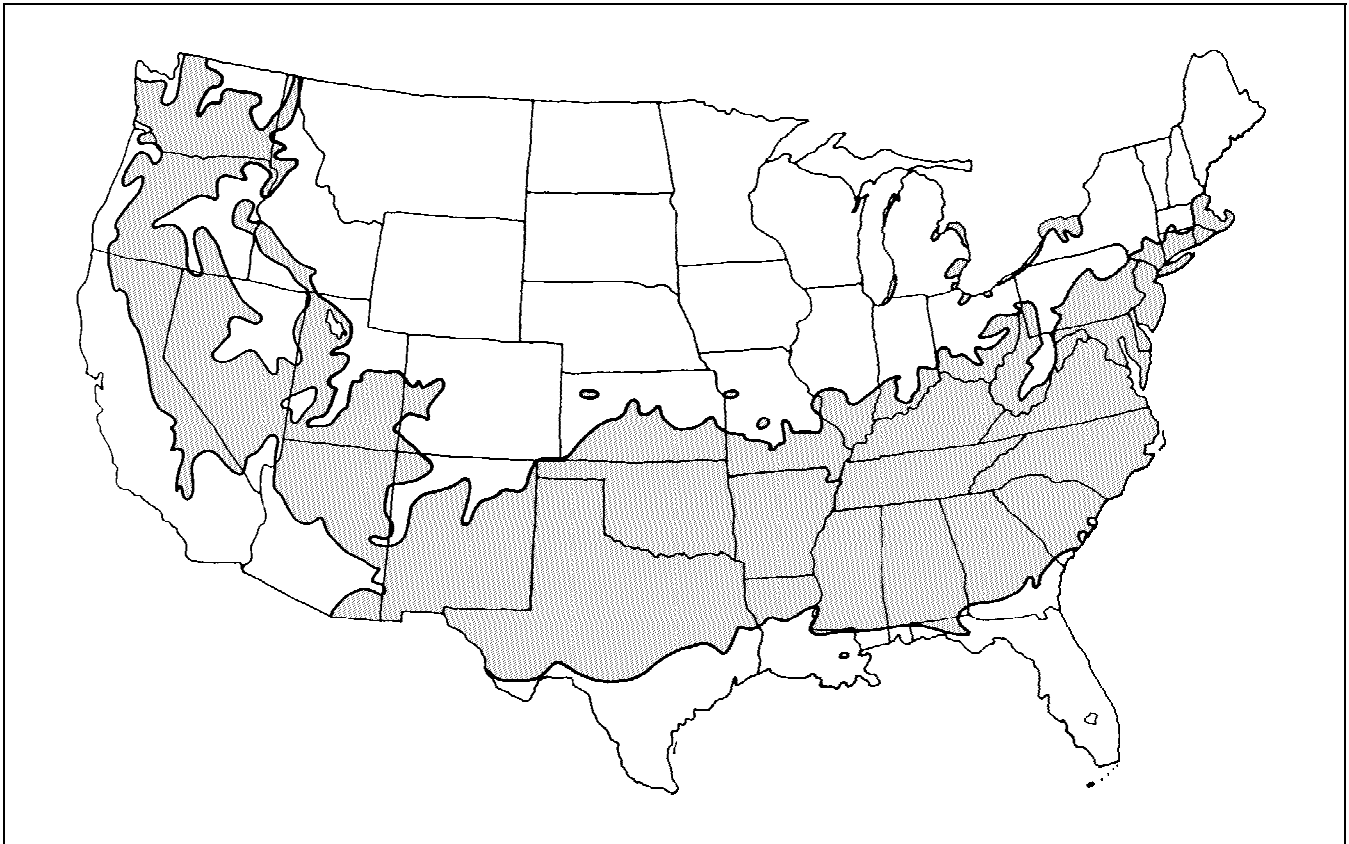


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Crown uniformity:** symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms

**Crown shape:** columnar

**Crown density:** dense

**Growth rate:** medium

**Texture:** fine

### Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** unknown (Fig. 3)

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** ovate; scale-like

**Leaf venation:** none, or difficult to see

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen; fragrant

**Leaf blade length:** less than 2 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

### Flower

**Flower color:** yellow

**Flower characteristics:** inconspicuous and not showy; spring flowering

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** elongated

**Fruit length:** .5 to 1 inch

**Fruit covering:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** brown

**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter problem; persistent on the tree

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** grow mostly upright and will not droop; should be grown with a single leader; very showy trunk; no thorns

**Pruning requirement:** needs little pruning to develop a strong structure

**Breakage:** resistant

**Current year twig color:** brown; green

**Current year twig thickness:** thin



Figure 3. Foliage of 'Fastigiata' Giant Arborvitae.

**Wood specific gravity:** 0.32

### Culture

**Light requirement:** tree grows in part shade/part sun;  
tree grows in the shade; tree grows in full sun

**Soil tolerances:** clay; loam; sand; acidic;  
occasionally wet; alkaline; well-drained

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Aerosol salt tolerance:** moderate

### Other

**Roots:** surface roots are usually not a problem

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding tree:** tree has outstanding ornamental  
features and could be planted more

**Invasive potential:** little, if any, potential at this time

**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** not known to be  
susceptible

**Pest resistance:** no pests are normally seen on the  
tree

## USE AND MANAGEMENT

Tolerating shearing quite well, Giant-Cedar is ideal for use as a hedge, screen, or specimen planting. The wood of this tree is commercially used in North America for the manufacture of roof shingles, deck boards, and siding and the split trunks were often used by Indians for making totem poles or canoes. Due to its narrow crown, works well close to buildings where soil is frequently alkaline and drainage is poor.

Giant-Cedar naturally occurs on river banks, swamps, and even bogs so it should be grown in full sun or partial shade on moist, well-drained, fertile soil,

and prefers a moist atmosphere. Apparently pH adaptable, growth is stunted on dry soils. Provide irrigation during the summer or locate in an area with moist soil and growth should be rapid.

Two of the other cultivars include: 'Arovirens', excellent shining green foliage and 'Canadian Gold' with yellow foliage.

Propagation is by seed or cuttings.

### Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern but may be occasionally bothered by bagworm, although this cultivar is reported to be more resistant than the species.