



## Cedrus atlantica 'Glauca' Blue Atlas Cedar<sup>1</sup>

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

### INTRODUCTION

A handsome evergreen with blue, bluish-green or light green foliage, 'Glauca' Atlas Cedar is perfect for specimen planting where it can grow without being crowded since the tree looks its best when branches are left on the tree to the ground (Fig. 1). This shows off the wonderful irregular, open pyramidal form with lower branches spreading about half the height. It grows rapidly when young, then slowly, reaching 40 to 60 feet tall by 30 to 40 feet wide. The trunk stays fairly straight with lateral branches nearly horizontal. Allow plenty of room for these trees to spread. They are best located as a lawn specimen away from walks, streets, and sidewalks so branches will not have to be pruned. It looks odd if lower branches are removed. Older trees become flat-topped and are a beautiful sight to behold.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Scientific name:** *Cedrus atlantica 'Glauca'*  
**Pronunciation:** SEE-drus at-LAN-tih-kuh  
**Common name(s):** Blue Atlas Cedar  
**Family:** Pinaceae  
**USDA hardiness zones:** 6 through 8 (Fig. 2)  
**Origin:** not native to North America  
**Uses:** Bonsai; specimen  
**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

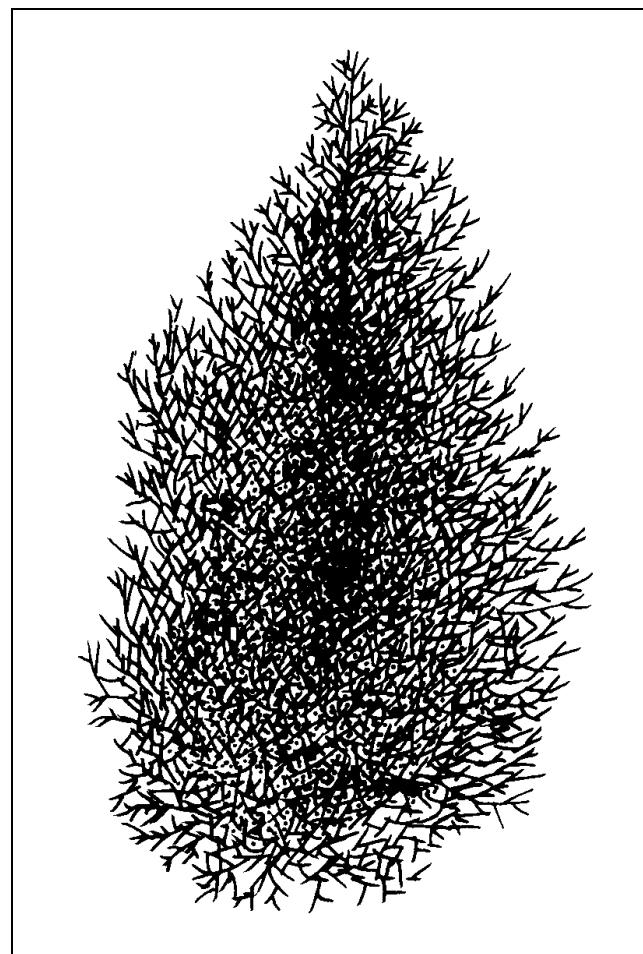


Figure 1. Young Blue Atlas Cedar.

### DESCRIPTION

**Height:** 40 to 60 feet  
**Spread:** 25 to 40 feet  
**Crown uniformity:** irregular outline or silhouette

1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-133, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: November 1993.
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**Figure 2.** Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Crown shape:** pyramidal

**Crown density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** medium

**Texture:** fine

### Foliage

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

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** needle-like (filiform)

**Leaf venation:** parallel

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen; needle leaf evergreen

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

**Leaf color:** blue or blue-green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

### Flower

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

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** oval

**Fruit length:** 3 to 6 inches

**Fruit covering:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** brown

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

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; not particularly showy; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns

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

**Breakage:** resistant

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

**Current year twig thickness:** medium

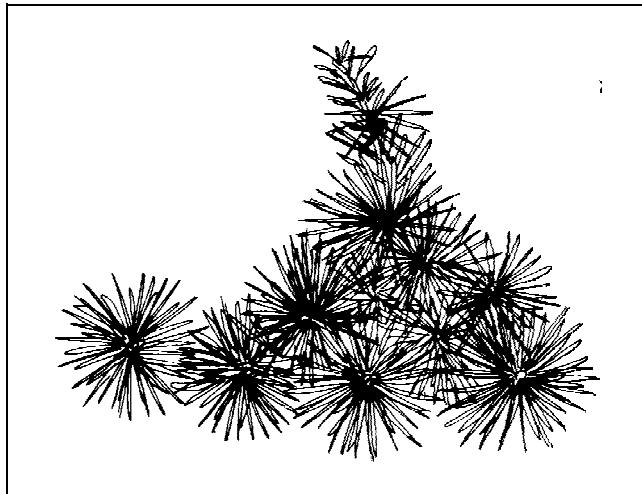


Figure 3. Foliage of Blue Atlas Cedar.

## Culture

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

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

**Drought tolerance:** high

**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

Difficult to transplant, 'Glauca' Atlas Cedar should be planted from a container. Soil preference is for well-drained deep loam, on the acid side, but it can tolerate sandy or clay soils and alkaline soil if they are very well-drained. The tree looks its best when sheltered from strong winds but tolerates open conditions, and will grow in full sun or partial shade. Allow for plenty of soil space around the tree since growth will be poor in restricted soil space. Tolerates extensive drought only when grown in an area where roots can explore a large soil area. Performs well in all areas within its hardiness range. It may be suited for zone 9 in California and Florida.

Propagation is by seed.

'Pendula' has a very strong weeping habit but must be staked and trained to make a tree, 15 feet tall; 'Argentea' has silver, almost white foliage.

## Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern. Generally free of insect pests and resistant to diseases, they may occasionally fall prey to tip blight, root rots (in poorly-drained soil) or black scale and the Deodar weevil. Usually no pest protection or control is necessary.

Sap-suckers are attracted to the trunk and often riddle it with small holes. This usually does little lasting harm to the tree.