



## *Pinus virginiana* Virginia Pine<sup>1</sup>

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### INTRODUCTION

This scrubby North American native tree is most often found growing in the poorest sites and will easily adapt to most soil conditions, except alkaline soils (Fig. 1). Capable of reaching up to 70 feet in height, Virginia Pine is more often seen from 20 to 40 feet in height with a 20 to 35-foot spread. The yellowish-green, 1.5 to 3-inch-long, flexible, evergreen needles are joined by the numerous, mature, prickly cones. The thin, orange/brown bark becomes ridged and furrowed on older trees, and is often seen due to the open branching habit.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Scientific name:** *Pinus virginiana*

**Pronunciation:** PIE-nus ver-jin-ee-AY-nuh

**Common name(s):** Virginia Pine, Scrub Pine

**Family:** *Pinaceae*

**USDA hardiness zones:** 5 through 8 (Fig. 2)

**Origin:** native to North America

**Uses:** Bonsai; recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; reclamation plant; specimen; Christmas tree; no proven urban tolerance

**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

### DESCRIPTION

**Height:** 20 to 40 feet

**Spread:** 20 to 35 feet

**Crown uniformity:** irregular outline or silhouette

**Crown shape:** round



Figure 1. Middle-aged Virginia Pine.

**Crown density:** open

**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; fragrant; needle leaf evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches; less than 2 inches

1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-481, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October 1994.
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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**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:** oval

**Fruit length:** 1 to 3 inches

**Fruit covering:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** brown

**Fruit characteristics:** attracts squirrels and other mammals; fruit, twigs, or foliage cause significant litter; persistent on the tree; showy

### 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:** susceptible to breakage either at the crotch due to poor collar formation, or the wood itself is weak and tends to break

**Current year twig color:** reddish

**Current year twig thickness:** thin

**Wood specific gravity:** 0.48

### Culture

**Light requirement:** tree grows in full sun

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

**Drought tolerance:** high

**Aerosol salt tolerance:** low

### Other

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

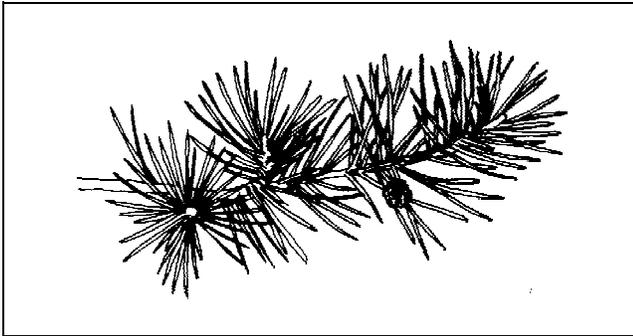
**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding tree:** not particularly outstanding

**Invasive potential:** seeds itself into the landscape

**Ozone sensitivity:** sensitive or moderately tolerant

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



**Figure 3.** Foliage of Virginia Pine.

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

### **USE AND MANAGEMENT**

Although considered to have an untidy appearance because of an irregular habit, the very low branches which stay on the tree help make Virginia Pine a popular choice in the South for culture as a Christmas tree. The trees grow moderately fast in cultivation and have a branching structure which tolerates pruning quite well. Pruning or shearing increases branchiness to create a nice Christmas tree. Can also be used for an open-branched specimen in a large-scale landscape.

Tolerant of a wide variety of soil types, Virginia Pine prefers to be grown in full sun on well-drained, loamy soil. It grows on soil too dry, rocky or clayey for most other plants, particularly Pines, but prefers acidic pH. It is useful as a reclamation tree due to the ability to seed itself in and tolerance to poor, dry soil.

Propagation is by seed.

### **Pests**

No pests are normally serious to this pine in the landscape, although the list of possible problems is long.

### **Diseases**

No diseases are normally serious to this pine in the landscape, although the list of possible problems is long.