

Conifers

in the New Jersey State Botanical Garden

NJBG has an outstanding collection of trees. Conifers are trees or shrubs that bear their seeds in cones. They do not have flowers or fruit. Most of them are evergreens, and their needles are on the trees all year. Most of the trees in the Winter Garden were planted in the 1920s.

1. Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*)

At the north end of the evergreens on the west side of the Winter Garden are two magnificent specimens. They are sometimes considered the same as the Atlas cedar. One is the blue form, the other green. Their size shows the mistake made when they are planted close to a building. Cones on cedars always point up. The needles are in dense clusters. Origin: Asia Minor

2. Japanese plum yew (*Cephalotaxus harringtonia*)

Specimens may be seen in front of the Carriage House. Like hemlock, this evergreen can be grown in the shade (most evergreens require sun). The needles are dark green and about 1/8" wide by 1-2" long. The brown uncovered seeds may be seen hanging from branches of female plants. It is not a favorite of deer.



3. Japanese cryptomeria (*Cryptomeria japonica*)

This tall tree is located at the north end of the Winter Garden. A close look shows beautiful reddish brown bark peeling in strips. In summer the awl-shaped needles are green or blue-green, becoming bronze to brown in winter. Many cultivars available in the nursery trade vary in color and size from the species. In Japan Cryptomeria is the major lumber tree.



4. Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*)

Native to China, they are often seen as street trees as they are resistant to pollution and require little care. At NJBG there is one near the end of the row of trees east of Maple Avenue and another in the stone circle west of the Manor House. Ginkgos bear seeds with a covering some people find foul-smelling. The leaves are fan-shaped, turn yellow in the fall, and all drop in a short interval.



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The NJBG/Skylands Association was founded in 1976 to help the State of New Jersey preserve and restore the gardens and Manor House, and to develop programs for public education and enjoyment throughout the year. Volunteers are always needed to help in the garden and with special projects.

For more information and a membership brochure, please call:

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NEW JERSEY BOTANICAL GARDEN
**New Jersey State
Botanical Garden**

Ringwood State Park
Morris Road • Ringwood, NJ

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5. Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)

Red cedars are common in New Jersey in abandoned fields and along sunny roadsides. The berry-like bluish cones on female trees are important bird food and are used for flavoring gin. The needles are scale-like and overlapping. Pointed juvenile leaves may be seen on mature trees. The wood of this tree has traditionally been used for cedar chests. At Skylands, they are in a row adjacent to the Carriage House.

6. Dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*)

Specimens may be found near the Concert Lawn. This deciduous conifer was introduced to the US from China in 1947. The tree shape is conical. The bright green needles turn orange-brown before they fall. The base of the tree is buttressed and the bark peels off in long narrow strips.

7. Norway spruce (*Picea abies*)

This tree is the Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree. The biggest specimens at Skylands are at the north end of the Octagonal Garden and between the Lilac Garden and the Peony Garden. Remember "branches up, twigs down" to identify these spruces. The cones of spruces hang down. Spruce needles are sharp, four-sided, and – when they fall – leave behind a prickly branchlet. Origin: northern Europe

8. Colorado spruce (*Picea pungens*)

The Winter Garden has several varieties of Colorado spruce. The needles are about 1" long and prickly. The green-needled variety is seen in the Rocky Mountains. The blue spruce is a variety frequently used as a specimen plant. The tall blue spruce at the north end of the Winter Garden is over 90' tall and 6' around. There is another one near the northwest corner of Skylands Manor.

9. Oriental spruce (*Picea orientalis 'Skylands'*)

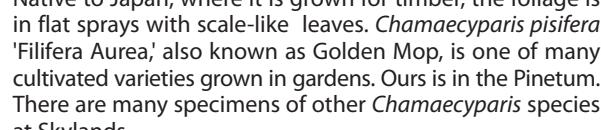
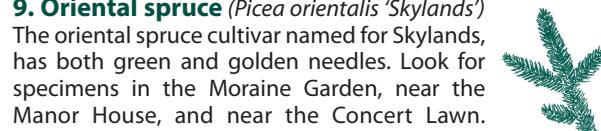
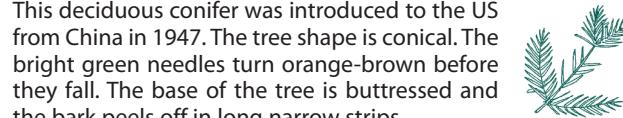
The oriental spruce cultivar named for Skylands, has both green and golden needles. Look for specimens in the Moraine Garden, near the Manor House, and near the Concert Lawn. Needles, 1/4" to 1/2" long, are the shortest of any spruce species. Origin: Asia Minor

10. Sawara cypress (*Chamaecyparis pisifera*)

Native to Japan, where it is grown for timber, the foliage is in flat sprays with scale-like leaves. *Chamaecyparis pisifera 'Filifera Aurea'*, also known as Golden Mop, is one of many cultivated varieties grown in gardens. Ours is in the Pinetum. There are many specimens of other *Chamaecyparis* species at Skylands.

11. Eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*)

There are many specimens of our native five-needed pine at NJBG. The weeping white pine at the north end of the Winter Garden is an exceptionally fine



example of its type. The needles remain on the tree two years before turning brown and falling in late summer or early fall. Mature white pines may be over 100' tall. They are an important source of wood. The cones of pines hang down.



12. Umbrella pine (*Sciadopitys verticillata*)

The pyramidal shape and arrangement of 20 to 30 needles in a whorl give this evergreen an unusual appearance. The dark glossy green needles are 2 to 5" long and 1/8" wide. When properly sited this is a fine specimen tree. Origin: Japan

13. Giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*)

The sequoia of the Sierra Nevadas of California (Yosemite) is near the Concert Lawn. The coast redwood is a different species requiring more moisture. The cultivar 'Hazel Smith' is pyramidal in form with bluish awl-shaped needles.



14. Bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*)

Located in the Bog Garden, these trees lose their needles in winter. The most interesting characteristic is the "knees" that are only seen when the tree is grown in wet places. Two pond cypress (*T. ascendens*) planted in 2002 to the north of the Lilac Garden in remembrance of the Twin Towers, have suffered greatly from deer rubbing their antlers on the trunks.



15. English yew (*Taxus baccata*)

One of the favorite plants of the Skylands' deer is the yew. The yew hedges in and near the Summer Garden are fenced each winter to protect them from deer browse. Yews are commonly used as hedges as they can be successfully pruned. There is a grand specimen of this yew to the west of Skylands Manor. The seeds, found only on female plants, are in a round red soft structure called an aril. All parts of the plant at all seasons are toxic except for the fleshy red arils.



16. Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*)

There are weeping hemlocks near the Concert Lawn and in the Pinetum. The compact dwarf hemlock near the bench in the Moraine Garden is *Tsuga canadensis 'Lewis'*, named for Skylands' long-term owner. There is a large specimen near the northwest corner of Skylands Manor. Both garden and forest hemlocks may be killed by infestations of the woolly adelgid (an insect).

