

Plant Profiles: HORT 2242 Landscape Plants II

Botanical Name: *Picea glauca* 'Conica'

Common Name: Dwarf Alberta Spruce

Family Name: Pinaceae – pine family

General Description: *Picea glauca* 'Conica' is a naturally occurring dwarf form sometimes listed as *Picea glauca* var. *conica*. It is a commonly used dwarf conifer favored for its formal, dense, pyramidal habit. It prefers to be sited in full sun in moist, but well drained soils. Good air circulation will benefit Dwarf Alberta Spruce as the densely set foliage and tight pyramidal habit creates a haven for insect problems, especially spider mites. It does not tolerate drought, pollution, salt spray or other urban stresses. For all its potential problems it remains a popular plant as its fine texture and shape lends a whimsical formality to the garden.

Zone: 2-6

Resources Consulted:

Dirr, Michael A. *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants: Their Identification, Ornamental Characteristics, Culture, Propagation and Uses*. Champaign: Stipes, 2009. Print.

Creator: Julia Fitzpatrick-Cooper, Professor, College of DuPage

Creation Date: 2014

Keywords/Tags: Pinaceae, tree, conifer, cone, needle, evergreen, *Picea glauca*, white spruce



Whole plant/Habit:

- Description: *Picea glauca* 'Conica' is a very slow growing, dense, broadly pyramidal conifer. It looks nothing like the straight species!
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: August 31, 2012
- Image File Name: dwarf_white_spruce_4443.png



Bark:

- Description: The bark is thin, flaky and gray. It is not a reliable identification feature.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: February 19, 2014
- Image File Name: dwarf_white_spruce_4561.png



Branch/Twig:

- Description: The dense foliage on the ends of the branches shades the inner stems, leaving rough bare stems.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: February 19, 2014
- Image File Name: dwarf_white_spruce_4565.png



Leaf/Leaf Attachment:

- Description: Typical of all spruces, there is one needle attached to a peg. The needles of *Picea glauca* 'Conica' are thin, short (less than ½ inch), densely set and radiate around the stem.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: February 19, 2014
- Image File Name: dwarf_white_spruce_4557.png



Category: Leaf/Leaf Attachment:

- Description: Brown needles can form for several reasons including a spider mite infestation or winter damage. The brown needles will not green back up again but new growth could potentially cover the damaged area.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: February 19, 2014
- Image File Name: dwarf_white_spruce_4560.png



Winter Interest:

- Description: The formal, whimsical form is accented in winter. Heavy amounts of snow should be gently brushed away to avoid bending or breaking the stems.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: February 1, 2011
- Image File Name: dwarf_white_spruce _1250080.png



Special ID feature(s):

- Description: *Picea glauca* 'Conica' is easily recognized by the tight, dense pyramidal habit. A popular trend is to plant this cultivar in groupings of staggered sizes creating a mini forest. A perfect spot for a gnome to hang out!
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: August 31, 2012
- Image File Name: dwarf_white_spruce _4455.png