

# *Juniperus virginiana* ‘Pendula’: ‘Pendula’ Eastern Redcedar<sup>1</sup>

Edward F. Gilman, Dennis G. Watson, Ryan W. Klein, and Deborah R. Hilbert<sup>2</sup>

## Introduction

This cultivar of redcedar is an evergreen growing 35 to 45 feet tall in a broad, oval form and spreading 15 to 25 feet when given a sunny location. Branch tips droop toward the ground lending a weeping habit to the tree. This makes it a good candidate for a specimen to accent an area of the landscape. It develops a brownish tint in winter in the north and is sometimes used in windbreaks or screens. The fruit is a blue berry on female trees and is ornamental when produced in quantity. Birds devour the fruit and ‘plant’ it along farm fences and in old abandoned fields. Some botanists do not separate *Juniperus virginiana* from *Juniperus silicicola*.

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Juniperus virginiana*

**Pronunciation:** joo-NIP-er-us ver-jin-ee-AY-nuh

**Common name(s):** ‘Pendula’ Eastern redcedar

**Family:** *Cupressaceae*

**USDA hardiness zones:** 3A through 9B (Figure 2)

**Origin:** native to North America



Figure 1. Young *Juniperus virginiana* ‘Pendula’: ‘Pendula’ Eastern redcedar.

Credits: UF/IFAS

**Invasive potential:** native cultivar

**Uses:** urban tolerant; reclamation; screen; specimen; highway median; bonsai

1. This document is ENH-492, one of a series of the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date November 1993. Revised December 2006 and March 2024. Visit the EDIS website at <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu> for the currently supported version of this publication.

2. Edward F. Gilman, professor emeritus; Dennis G. Watson, former associate professor, Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering; Ryan W. Klein, assistant professor, arboriculture; and Deborah R. Hilbert, UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center; Department of Environmental Horticulture; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

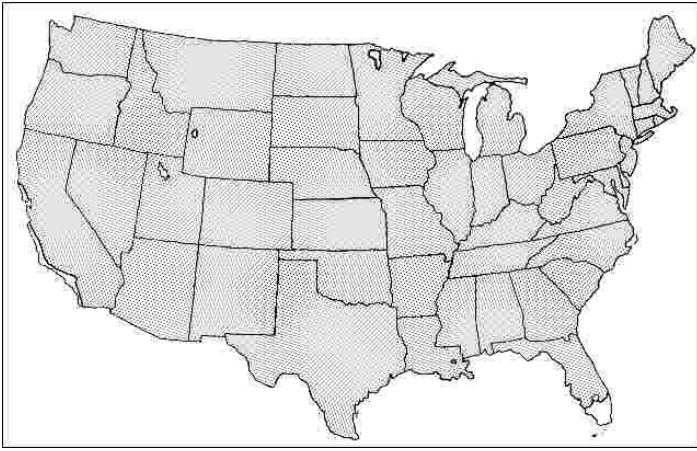


Figure 2. Range.  
Credits: UF/IFAS

## Description

**Height:** 35 to 45 feet

**Spread:** 15 to 25 feet

**Crown uniformity:** symmetrical

**Crown shape:** weeping, pyramidal, columnar

**Crown density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** fast

**Texture:** fine

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** whorled (Figure 3)

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire, terminal spine

**Leaf shape:** awl-like, scale-like

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

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen

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

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** no color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

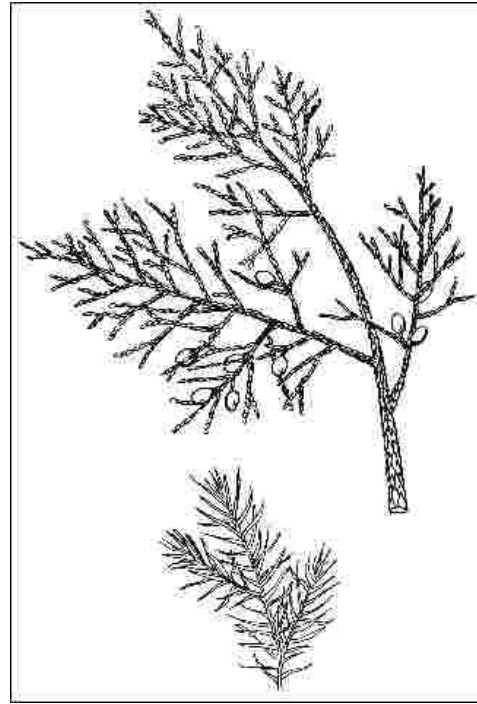


Figure 3. Foliage.  
Credits: UF/IFAS

## Flower

**Flower color:** yellow, green

**Flower characteristics:** not showy

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** cone, round

**Fruit length:** less than 0.5 inch

**Fruit covering:** fleshy

**Fruit color:** blue, purple

**Fruit characteristics:** attracts birds; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** branches droop; showy; typically one trunk; thorns

**Pruning requirement:** needed for strong structure

**Breakage:** susceptible to breakage

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

**Current year twig thickness:** thin

**Wood specific gravity:** 0.47

## Culture

**Light requirement:** full sun, partial sun, or partial shade

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

**Drought tolerance:** high

**Aerosol salt tolerance:** high

## Other

**Roots:** not a problem

**Winter interest:** no

**Outstanding tree:** no

**Ozone sensitivity:** unknown

**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** resistant

**Pest resistance:** free of serious pests and diseases

## Use and Management

The dense growth and attractive foliage make Eastern redcedar a favorite for windbreaks, screens, and wildlife-cover for large-scale landscapes. Its high salt-tolerance makes it ideal for seaside locations. Redcedar can make a nice Christmas tree, and the fragrant wood is popular for repelling insects.

Planted in full sun or partial shade, Eastern redcedar will easily grow on a variety of soils, including clay, but will not do well on soils kept continually moist. Growth will be poor in landscapes which are over-irrigated. Plants are difficult to transplant due to a coarse root system, except when quite small. Water until well-established and then forget about the tree. It performs admirably with no care, even on alkaline soil and along the coast. Usually, insects and diseases are not a problem if grown in the full sun. There may be local restrictions on planting this tree near apple orchards because it is the alternate host for cedar-apple rust.

Some nurseries carry a cultivar or two of redcedar.

Other cultivars include: 'Burkii'—pyramidal, blue foliage, 15 to 25 feet tall; 'Canaertii'—compact, pyramidal, good fruit production, fairly common in Texas; 'Hillspire'—(cypressifolia)—good green color; 'Elegantissima'—Goldtip Redcedar—branchlets with yellow tips, less than 20 feet tall; 'Filifera'—pyramidal, branchlets divided, foliage gray

green; 'Glauca'—Silver Redcedar - narrow, columnar, 15 to 20 feet tall, silvery blue foliage especially in spring; 'Ketterii' is commonly available in the mid-west, is more open with spaces between branches at the top of the tree, pyramidal; 'Manhattan Blue'—compact, 20 feet tall, pyramidal, foliage bluish green; 'Pyramidalis Dundee'—pyramidal, purplish green in winter; 'Skyrocket'—silver-blue foliage, narrow columnar form.

## Pests

Usually none are serious.

Bagworm caterpillars occasionally web foliage and debris together to make bags up to 2 inches long. The insects live in the bags and emerge to feed on the foliage. Use sprays of *Bacillus thuringiensis*. The insects can also be picked off the plants by hand.

Juniper scale causes yellowed needles, and infected branches fail to produce new growth. The scale is round and at first white, later turning gray or black.

The juniper webworm webs twigs and needles together, causing them to brown and die. The larva is 1/2-inch-long and is brown with darker stripes. The larvae are often in the densest part of the plant and can go unnoticed.

Mites cause stippled and bronzed foliage.

## Diseases

Twig blights cause death and browning of twig tips. The diseases may progress down the stem killing the whole branch. Small lesions may be seen at the base of dead tissue. Prune out dead branch tips. Dieback from Kabatina blight appears in early spring, from Phomopsis in summer.

Three rust diseases seen most often are cedar-apple rust, hawthorn rust, and quince rust. The most common is cedar-apple rust. On juniper the first two diseases form galls and orange jelly-like horns in spring. The horns are most likely to form following periods of rainy, warm weather. Spores formed in the horns infect the alternate host. The diseases are more serious on the alternate host than juniper. There may be local restrictions on planting this tree near apple orchards because it is the alternate host for cedar-apple rust. A separation of a few hundred yards may help avoid the disease. Prune out the spore horns when seen in the spring. Do not plant near hawthorns, apples, or crabapples.

Junipers are not tolerant of ice coatings. Expect dieback when junipers are covered with ice for several days. Removing the ice is impractical.