

The Eastern Hemlock, *Tsuga canadensis*

The eastern hemlock is native to northeastern North America, where it starts its life as an understory tree. As it slowly matures, it pushes its way up through the broad-leaf trees that surround it until it reaches the forest canopy. It can reach more than 100 feet in height in forests but is sometimes kept pruned to shrub size in urban landscapes. It is often referred to as the “Redwoods of the East”. This slow-growing long-lived tree may take 250 to 300 years to fully mature and may live for 800 years or more.



Description of eastern hemlock:

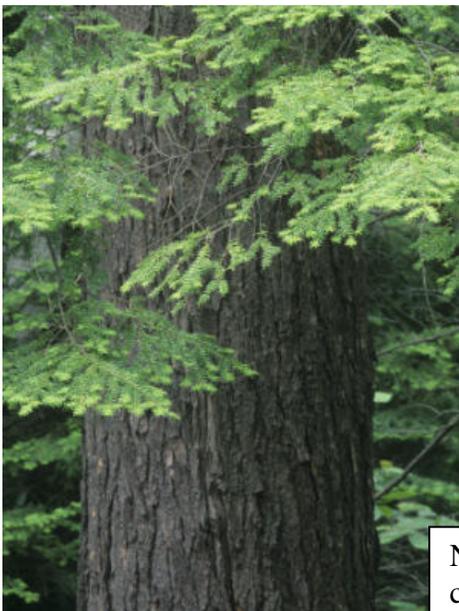
The eastern hemlock is a gracefully pyramidal evergreen conifer with horizontal to drooping branches. The furrowed bark is brown and the needles are short and soft, not pointed like relatively similar firs and spruce. Some conifer specialists rate it as highly as the eastern white pine for landscape use.



Growing eastern hemlock tree: Hemlocks prefer rich, moist, well-drained soils somewhat on the acid side. They do poorly in dry, windswept locations. Among the few trees that will grow in full shade, they will have a nicer, denser appearance in light shade to full sun. They can be pruned to any size, from low hedges to tall screens. To maintain the tree's naturally lacy effect, do not prune by shearing, but rather by cutting back on overly long branches each year. The plant is extremely susceptible to a foliage pest that has rendered this tree useless as a landscape plant throughout much of its range.

The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid is a small aphid like pest that was mistakenly brought to the US from Asia in the 1950s. Since then it has been slowly moving westward.

Without successful intervention, this non-native pest has the potential to kill most or all of the native hemlocks in the Eastern U.S.



Notice the clusters of white cottony covering over the Woolly Adelgid. 