

Tsuga canadensis

Eastern Hemlock
Canadian Hemlock

Native to Maine

Upland

Leaves



Vital Signs user "wonderWHY"



Look for flat, alternately arranged needles that are 1.5-2 cm long. They have 2 white "racing stripes" on the undersides. Look closely at how the needles attach to the twig. There is a small stem (petiole) at the base of each needle, and a woody "peg" where the stem attaches to the twig.



Sarah Morrisseau, GMRI



Plant



Alison Kanoti, Maine Forest Service



Look for an evergreen (has needles year-round), coniferous (cone bearing) tree that grows to 30 m tall. The branches of the tree have a drooping appearance.

Stem



Wiki Commons user Derek Ramsey (Ram-Man)



Older bark is brownish, scaly, and cracked. Twigs are flexible and covered with short hairs.

Seasonal Change



Flickr user bobistraveling



Look for flowers in the spring. Male flowers are small and yellow. Female flowers are small green cones that develop into small, brown, 1.5-2.5 cm long cones.

Similar Species

It is easy to confuse hemlock and balsam fir. To tell them apart, look at how the needle attaches to the twig. Fir needles attach like a suction cup. Hemlock needles attach with a small stem. Fir twigs are stiff while hemlock twigs are flexible. Yew needles do not have white stripes.

Fun Fact

Tannins from Eastern Hemlock bark were used to tan sheepskins and heavy leather for shoes in the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Trees were cut down and stripped of their bark, which was then milled to extract tannins.

Researched and created by: Rebecca Martin

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