



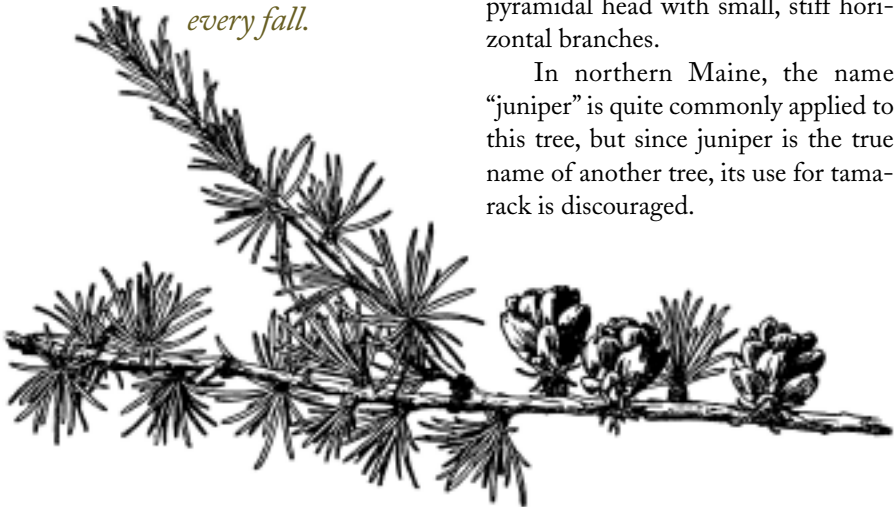
**TAMARACK** *Larix laricina* (Du Roi) K. Koch

**T**amarack, eastern larch or hackmatack is most commonly found in cool, swampy places, although it also grows on well-drained soil. It is found in scattered stands throughout the state. It can grow rapidly and is not tolerant of shade.

In the forest, the tree grows to a height of 50–60 feet and a diameter of 20 inches. It has a regular, narrow, pyramidal head with small, stiff horizontal branches.

In northern Maine, the name “juniper” is quite commonly applied to this tree, but since juniper is the true name of another tree, its use for tamarack is discouraged.

*Tamarack is our only native conifer that sheds all its leaves every fall.*





NATIONAL AND  
MAINE REGISTER OF  
BIG TREES 2008

**Tamarack**

**Circumference:** 143"

**Height:** 92'

**Crown Spread:** 31'

**Location:** T13 R8 WELS



The **bark** separates on the surface into small, thin, irregular reddish-brown scales.

The **leaves** are linear, about 1 inch long, triangular in cross section, and borne in clusters of 8 or more on spurs, except on elongating new shoots, where they occur singly. They are bright green and turn a beautiful yellow just before they fall. Tamarack provides some of the last color of the fall, as its needles turn color after most trees have already shed their leaves. It is our only native conifer that sheds all its leaves every fall.

The **cones** are small, nearly spherical, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch long, light brown, and borne erect on stout stems. They open in fall to liberate the small

winged seeds and usually remain on the tree until the following year.

The **wood** is rather coarse-grained, hard, heavy and strong, with durable heartwood. It is used for planking, timbers, ties, poles, signposts, pilings and pulp. Historically, tamarack knees (the buttresses formed by large roots) were used in shipbuilding. Tamarack was also used for mud sills in home construction.



*On older twigs, tamarack needles occur in clusters of up to 50 on short spur branches.*

