

# Black spruce (*Picea mariana*)

## Form

Small tree; straight trunk up to 12" in diameter with somewhat drooping branches; mature tree usually reaches a height of 20' to 30', although under favorable conditions, it can attain a height of 70' to 80'; often associated with tamarack, balsam fir, and white cedar. In cold swamps the growth is practically stagnant and trees 2" in diameter have been found to be 127 years old.

## Bark

Grayish to reddish-brown, scaly.

## Leaf

Needlelike, bluish green, short, pointed, four-sided; length 1/2"; found scattered thinly over branches.

## Fruit (seed)

Cones oval shaped, length 1/2" to 1-1/2"; young cones purple, mature cones dark brown, remaining on trees indefinitely; open in the fall to release seeds; seeds small, dark brown, and winged, mature in one season.

## Range

Northern and northeastern parts of the state, extending as far south as northern Anoka County; shade tolerant; common marsh or bog species.

*Reference State of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources*

