

Lacebark Pine, *Pinus bungeana*

Alex X. Niemiera, Associate Professor, Department of Horticulture

Summary

Foliage: About 3 inches long; 3 needles per fascicle; stiff; evergreen

Height: About 40 feet

Spread: About 25 feet

Shape: Conical in youth, irregular with age

Main Features

Lacebark pine is a medium (sometimes large) conifer species that has strikingly beautiful bark. Bark is a camouflage-like patchwork of greens, silvery-white, creams, browns, and red-browns. There is a great amount of tree to tree variation in bark color; patchwork of colors begins to appear on approximately 2 inch diameter branches. Lacebark pine usually produces several main trunks which can be an asset since more trunks embellishes the showy bark characteristic. However, this multiple trunk tendency is also a liability since multiple trunks are not as sturdy as a single trunk, and multi-trunk trees are susceptible to snow and ice damage. The extra weight of snow and ice on branches will cause them to split away from the main (or large) trunks.

Plant Needs

Zone: 5 to 7

Light: Full sun

Moisture: Average to somewhat dry

Soil type: Average

pH range: Acid

Functions

This species can certainly be used as a specimen tree (has sufficiently notable attributes to be used as a focal point) in a garden or landscape.

Care

Trees may be pruned at an early age to develop a single trunk. This species has relatively few pest problems.

Additional Information

Lacebark pine is purported to have a slow growth rate, but I have found that under average conditions (minimum of stressful conditions) that a medium growth rate (1 to 2 feet per year) can be achieved. The cultivar 'Silver Ghost' has a silver-gray bark at a relatively young age. This species is highly revered in China and is often planted on the grounds of temples, graveyards, and emperor's palaces.