Colorado Spruce

*Picea pungens var. glauca*

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**Summary:**
Foliage: About 1 inch long sharp needles; evergreen
Height: About 50 feet
Spread: About 25 feet
Shape: Conical
Main features: Colorado spruce is usually a dense conical conifer. Within the species there is a botanical variety called the Glauca Group (var. *glauca*). The foliage of seedlings from plants in the Glauca Group can vary from green to bright powder blue. There are many cultivars with blue foliage that vary in the intensity of blue color. Cultivars also offer a range of sizes, forms, compactness, and growth rates. This species is quite tolerant of drought and poor soils. Due to the striking quality of the blue foliage, cultivars are quite attention-grabbing and easily serve as focal points in the landscape.

**Plant Needs:**
Zone: 3 to 7
Light: Full sun
Moisture: Average to dry
Soil type: Most soils except those that are poorly drained
pH range: Acid to alkaline

**Functions:**
Due to the striking quality of the blue foliage, cultivars are quite attention-grabbing and easily serve as focal points in the landscape. Colorado spruce can also be used in groupings and as a border. One might want to use restraint when using blue foliaged cultivars, since too many may be distracting in a typical home setting. I have seen entryways, distant from the residence, that were lined with blue foliage cultivars that looked quite good.

**Care:**
No special care if needed for this species. Needles are quite sharp so do not plant this species where human-to-plant contact is likely.

**Additional Information:**
There are many fine cultivars with blue foliage that vary in the intensity of blue color. Cultivars also offer a range of sizes, forms, compactness, and growth rates. Here are few of the notable cultivars:
‘Fat Albert’ dwarf compact form with good blue foliage color
‘Glaucia Globosa’ globe-shaped to broad conical dwarf form with good blue foliage; apparently there are more than one clones being sold under this name
‘Glaucia Pendula’ perhaps the same as ‘Glaucia Procumbens’ and ‘Glaucia Prostrata’; ground cover form; plants will occasionally send up a vertical shoot which needs to be pruned off to keep from forming an upright plant
‘Hoopsii’ one of the brightest light blue foliaged cultivars
‘Montgomery’ dwarf wide conical form with very blue foliage
‘Thomsen’ also listed as ‘Thompsen’ and ‘Thompsenii’ one of the brightest light blue foliaged cultivars