

Cherokee Ethnobiology

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EASTERN RED CEDAR

Cherokee Usage

The cedar, an evergreen, is said to “never die”. Therefore, it keeps the same “mood” all the time - through drought and flood, heat and cold - it remains the same. It is believed to be a very powerful tree, so much so that if someone tries to transplant a young cedar, they will die before that cedar reaches the height of that individual. The Cedar tree is used in medicine to cure ailments such as colds, female obstructions, measles, worms, itch, white swelling, and rheumatism. It has also been used for carving, in furniture, for fence posts, moth proofing, and to keep bees and wasps away. Sometimes deer hunters will use Cedar as a cover scent to mask their own scent. The Cedar tree is also used by some as a Christmas tree.

Description

The Eastern Red Cedar is a medium-sized tree that can attain heights up to 30 feet. Sometimes even taller specimens can be found. Keeping its foliage intact year round, the leaves consist of small needles that are sharp and less than ½” long. The Cedar fruit is only about ¼” in diameter and looks like a berry, but the “berry” is actually a cone made of small scales. Cedar wood is aromatic, strong, and decay resistant. This makes useful in a number of craft/construction applications (from picture frames to fence posts).

Where found:	Eastern Red Cedar can be found in just about every type of habitat, throughout all of the state, except the Panhandle.
Other Name:	Cedar, Juniper
Taxonomy:	Kingdom - Plantae Phylum - Pinophyta Class - Pinopsida Order – Pinales Family – Cupressaceae Genus — <i>Juniperus</i> Species — <i>virginia</i>

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