

Arizona Cypress

Cupressus arizonica ssp. arizonica

Secondary Names:

Arizona Rough Cypress, Cedro Blanco

Leaf Type: Evergreen

Texas Native: Yes No

Firewise: Yes No



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Tree Description:

A tall, straight, evergreen tree with a conical crown, to 90 feet tall and a trunk to 2 feet in diameter, with distinctly blue-gray foliage.

Range/Site Description:

Native in Texas only to the high, protected canyons of the Chisos mountains in Big Bend National Park, but it is planted widely in desert landscapes and other very well-drained sites east to Austin.

Leaf:

The scale-like leaves are blue-green, with a whitish "bloom" that gives the overall impression of blue or gray foliage.

Flower:

Small cones of both sexes are borne on the tips of the branches in spring.

Fruit:

A round, woody cone, about 1" across, with flattened scales separating slightly. Persisting on the twigs for several years.

Bark:

Smooth and red-brown, developing thin, papery scales as the tree ages, which peel away from the trunk to reveal new bark beneath. Older bark is fibrous and light brown.

Wood:

May have been used locally for timbers and fenceposts; sold as a landscape tree in nurseries and is highly valued as a windbreak tree and a Christmas tree.

Similar Species:

Tamarisks (*Tamarix* spp.) are riparian invasive exotic species in West Texas.

Interesting Facts:

Trees in Big Bend are thought to be a remnant from a time when the climate in Texas was cooler and wetter.