

Ashe Juniper

Juniperus ashei

Secondary Names:

Mountain cedar

Leaf Type: Evergreen

Texas Native: Yes No

Firewise: Yes No



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Tree Description:

A shrub or small to medium-sized tree, to 30 feet tall and a trunk to 16" in diameter, usually with forks or branches very close to the ground forming a dense, dark green, conical crown of foliage.

Range/Site Description:

The common juniper throughout Central Texas. This tree often forms extensive low forests or dense "cedar breaks" on the limestone hills and slopes of the Hill Country and the Edwards Plateau. Considered an invasive weed species over much of its range.

Leaf:

Scale-like, dark green, blunt pointed, and fringed with minute teeth. On vigorous young plants the leaves are sharp pointed and longer, up to 0.5" long.

Flower:

Male and female cones on separate trees; male conelets oblong, very small, at the tips of branchlets; female cones oval, inconspicuous.

Fruit:

On the female trees, a round, dark blue, berrylike cone that is covered with glaucous bloom; it has a thin, pleasant-scented, sweet flesh, enclosing 1 or 2 seeds, and ripens in one season.

Bark:

Reddish-brown and peeling into long strips; developing shallow fissures on old trunks.

Wood:

Light, hard, light brown, close-grained but weak, the wood is extensively used for fence posts and fuelwood.

Similar Species:

Eastern redcedar (*Juniperus virginiana* var. *virginiana*) occurs in East Texas and has an upright, conical form.

Interesting Facts:

The strips of bark are used by the endangered golden-cheeked warbler to make its nests. Many people are allergic to the pollen, resulting in outbreaks of "cedar fever" in late winter.