
Pinus taeda L. - Loblolly pine, yellow pine

Posted by treeman - 10/06/2007 09:30pm

Region: Southeastern USA

Height (average to extreme): 75-120 ft.(35-40 meters)

Diameter (average to extreme): 16" to 60"

Shape: (single leader/trunk to a spreading form): Strong central leader (excurrent) but changing to a more spreading form as tree matures (decurent).

1st pitch height: (average to extreme): 40 feet to 75 feet.

Common hazards: Tends to have a lot of dead branches on the lower section. The dead wood is not often very large. They get a bit brittle as they age and the wood peckers carve into them making them more fragile. This tree does not stand up well to ice loading as it tends to shed profusely during a heave ice load. They sound like rifle shots when they go, which is really quite terrifying! But then again we don't get ice storms very often down south these days either. It's rare.

Notable features (why you like it): These are limber trees. This means they sway quite noticeably in the wind. To me they are perfect "tree surfing" species. I've had 5-10 feet of sway on each side during a medium wind on the smaller trees (18" or so). It takes a while to get your equilibrium back when you back on the ground. Sort of like being in a heaving sea without the up and down motion. If you hang down a bit from the top you get a different ride- like hanging from a fly rod. This has more of a yo-yo effect (up and down with sway).

Sound during breeze (example-high hissing of needles, flapping large leaves): I love the high hissing of the wind passing through the needles. Plus you get all that movement making for quite a dramatic climb!

Interesting information: The name "Loblolly" I have been told is Native American Cherokee for the word "mud". Meaning that these trees like wet areas. I've seen forests of these trees in swampy areas averaging 36" diameter going up to 60" with heights averaging 120 feet. Incredible- as were the mosquitoes! This is a principal timber tree often planted in tree farms. Life expectancy= 350 years.

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