

Picea glauca var. *albertiana*

[Synonyms : *Abies arctica*, *Picea alba*, *Picea alba* var. *albertiana*, *Picea albertiana*]

DWARF ALBERTA SPRUCE is an evergreen tree. Native to north-western North America (particularly the Canadian Rocky Mountains) it has needle-like leaves and tiny light red to yellow or yellowish-green catkins.

It is also known as *Alberta gran* (Swedish), Alberta spruce, Alberta white spruce, Western white spruce, and White spruce.

Glauca is derived from Latin *glaucus* (bluish-grey, greenish-grey) meaning ‘covered with a fine, powdery whitish coating’.

Albertiana commemorates a German patron of the arts, science and industry in Britain, Prince Albert (1819-1861), who was Prince Consort (from 1857) to his first cousin, Queen Victoria (1819-1901) after their marriage in 1840. From 1847-1861 he was chancellor of Cambridge University during a significant period in its modernisation and later he also became master of Trinity House (responsible for the care and provision of lighthouses and navigational aids around the Country, as well as charitable aid and support for mariners). In addition he handled the family’s affairs and estates. Prince Albert was instrumental in the fund-raising, planning and organization (with the support of his deputy, the English writer, designer and civil servant, Sir Henry Cole, 1808-1882) of the Great Exhibition of 1851. This was housed in the Crystal Palace, designed by the English gardener and architect, Sir Joseph Paxton (1801-1865) and erected in Hyde Park (to be moved afterwards to Sydenham where it burnt down in 1936). The Exhibition contained over 100,000 exhibits shown by 13,937 exhibitors displaying international scientific and industrial advances (the building itself fulfilling both aspects) and their impact on society. The profits from it paid for the London sites of the South Kensington museums and colleges, as well as that of the Royal Albert Hall. Prince Albert, although impartial in politics, kept abreast of public affairs and is said to have been influential in dissuading British involvement in 1859 in the brewing American Civil War (1861-1865). During his lifetime the royal couple bought Osborne House on the Isle of Wight and Balmoral Castle in Scotland. Although typhoid was stated at the time as the cause of his death scholars have subsequently mused on the possibility that it may have been a form of stomach cancer. His remains are in Frogmore, the mausoleum specially built by Queen Victoria at Windsor for the royal family. Among the public monuments erected in his memory are the Albert Memorial and the Royal Albert Hall.

This lightweight, white to pale yellowish-brown wood has been used for timber and pulp..