

Pinus taeda

LOBLOLLY PINE is an evergreen tree. Native to south-eastern North America it has needle-like leaves and pale reddish-brown cones.

It is also known as Bastard pine, Black pine, Black slash pine, Bog pine, *Borovice kadidlová* (Czech), Buckskin pine, Bull pine, Carolina pine, Cornstalk pine, Foxtail pine, Frankincense pine, Heart pine, Indian pine, Lobby pine, Longleaf pine, Longschat pine, Longshucks, Longshucks pine, Longstraw pine, Maiden pine, Meadow pine, North Carolina pine, Oldfield pine, Old pine, Prop pine, Rosemary pine, Sap pine, Shortleaf pine, Shortstraw pine, Slash black pine, Slash pine, Southern pine, Southern yellow pine, Spruce pine, Swamp pine, Torch pine, *Virakfyr* (Danish), Virginia pine, Virginia sap pine, *Weihrauch-Kiefer* (German), and Yellow pine.

In the past a crude turpentine was harvested by boring holes into the trunk in Winter. Slowly from then until Spring the holes filled up with resin and this was distilled to separate out the turpentine oil and rosin. The resin was also boiled to make pitch or tar.

The flowers are pollinated by the wind.

Warning – prolonged contact with the fresh wood can cause dermatitis and allergic breathing problems.

The tree has been declared an invasive species in Hawaii – and in South Africa loblolly pine has been declared an alien invading plant and its cultivation there is only allowed for commercial purposes in specified areas or reserves.

Taeda is a reference to the resinous wood.

North American Cherokee Indians not only used the very heavy, reddish-brown wood for construction but also for making their 30-40 ft. long canoes – and for carving.

This hard wood has had wide popularity for general construction and has also provided material for pulping (for paper), for building interiors and when preserved for railway sleepers, piling, masts, mine supports and poles. It has also been made into crates and boxes and some authorities note its extensive use today for manufacturing plywood and have declared it to be one of the (if not the) leading commercial timber species in its native area.

The tree's rapid growth has recommended it for inclusion in reforestation programmes including mine reclamation. It has been planted too as a shade tree, an ornamental tree, a windbreak and a useful noise barrier. The trees have also been cultivated in areas prone to soil erosion as a stabilising influence.

It was adopted as a state emblem for Arkansas in the United States in 1939 – as well as shortleaf pine (*Pinus echinata*).

A colourful range of wildlife accept the tree as a suitable habitat and cover, including deer, squirrels and birds such as wild turkey, doves, quail, warblers and woodpeckers. The bald eagle and the osprey are both known to nest in them. Small mammals and songbirds eat the tiny, mottled, dark reddish-brown seeds, while deer and rabbits will browse on young shoots.

Medicinally, local herbalists used the turpentine oil for treating urinary disorders and intestinal worms, as well as both a stimulant and a laxative. Inhalation of vapour from the tar was

recommended in remedies for lung problems – and the tar itself was applied to blemishes and diseased skin.