Beyond blue spruce: Uncommon conifers for Michigan landscapes

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Why conifers?
- Variety of design functions
  - Specimens
  - Contrast elements
  - Borders
  - Mass as background
- Increased interest in dwarf and unusual forms
- Specialty plantings
  - Rock gardens
  - Containers
  - RR Gardens
- Year-round interest
  - Evergreen
  - Bark
  - Cones
- Botanically interesting
- Often low maintenance
- Add unique form, texture, color to landscape
Size classes recognized by the American Conifer Society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Growth per year</th>
<th>Approx. size at 10 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miniature</td>
<td>&lt; 1”</td>
<td>&lt; 1’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwarf</td>
<td>1” to 6”</td>
<td>1’ to 6’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>6” to 12”</td>
<td>6’ to 15’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>&gt;12”</td>
<td>&gt;15’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Miniature conifers

Picea glauca
‘Pixie dust’
Pinus parvifolia ‘Hagoromo’

Dwarf conifers

Pinus aristata
‘Sherwood compact’
Pinus glauca
‘Sander’s blue’

Pinus omorika
‘Nana’

Chamaecyparis obtusa
‘Nana lutea’

Pinus strobus
‘Compacta’
*Tsuga canadensis* ‘Guldemond’s Dwarf’

Intermediate conifers

*Chamaecyparis pisifera* ‘Filifera aurea’
Chamaecyparis pisifera ‘Filifera aurea’

Pinus cembra ‘Compacta’

Pinus cembra ‘Silver sheen’

Abies concolor ‘Conica’
*Picea abies*  
‘Aurea magnifica’

*Pinus koraiensis*

Large conifers

*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*
Pinus strobus

Conifer Form Classes

Globose: globe-like or rounded in general outline.

Pinus mugo ‘Mops’
*Pinus mugo* ‘Aurea’

*Picea glauca* ‘Blue planet’

*Pendulous:* upright or mounding with varying degrees of weeping branches.

*Picea abies* ‘Virgata’
Picea glauca ‘Pendula’

Larix decidua ‘Julian’s weeper’

Chamaecyparis nootkatensis ‘Green arrow’

Narrow upright: much taller than broad;
- Fastigiate
- Columnar
- Narrowly pyramidal
- Narrowly conical
*Picea glauca*
‘Pendula’

*Thuja occidentalis*
‘Degroot’s spire’

*Picea orientalis*
‘Skylands’

**Broad upright**: includes all other upright plants which do not fit into categories 1-3.
*Picea pungens 'Montgomery'*

*Abies lasiocarpa var. arizonica ‘compacta’*
Prostrate: ground-hugging, carpeting plants without an inclination to grow upward

*Juniperus horizontalis* ‘Motherlode’

*Picea abies* ‘Procumbens’
Picea pungens ‘Glauc a procumbens’

Spreading: wider than tall.

Abies normanniana ‘Golden spreader’

Picea abies ‘Pumila’
Tsuga canadensis
‘Brookline’

Irregular: erratic growth pattern.

Picea glauca
‘Fort Ann’
Pinus banksiana 'Uncle Fogy'

Larix decidua 'Varied directions'

Picea abies ‘Inversa’
Culturally altered: pruned or trained into formal or imaginative shapes, such as high grafts or standards.
Double graft

Microbiota decussata & Chamaecyparis obtusa

Hedging
Thank you!