# Balsam Fir

**Scientific name: Abies balsamea**

**Balsam Fir is a native tree to Pine County. It is considered a conifer which means it has needles. It also keeps its needles all year. It is considered very tolerant to shade.**

## Characteristics:

- **Needles – They are flat and around 1 inch long. The underside has two white silvery streaks, and the tips of the needles are blunt or can appear notched.**
- **Flower - Both male and female flowers grow on the same tree, making it a monoecious tree.**
- **Cones – They grow upright and are 2 to 4 inches in length. The occur at the peak of the crown or top of the tree and are purple or olive-green before turning brown.**
- **Bark – It is ash-gray in color, thin, and appears smooth. It can have numerous pitch pockets or also called blisters throughout the bark. They'll ooze resin when punctured. Older trees may have blocky scales but still is smooth.**

### Habitat:

- **Growth Rate – Moderate to rapid growth.**
- **Age – up to 200 years.**
- **Height – 20 to 40 feet tall.**
- **Roots – are shallow and spread out.**

## Soils:

- **The best soils are loams, silt loams, and clay loams but will grow on gravelly sands and peat swamps.**
- **The drainage preferred is well-drained but will tolerate limited poorly drained.**
- **The moisture level preferred is moist but will tolerate limited wet soils.**

## Weaknesses:

- **Spruce budworm and balsam twig aphid are some insects that affect it.**
- **Armillaria root rot and needle rust are diseases that it can get.**
- **It is very sensitive to salt spray.**

## Uses:

- **It is great for collecting boughs, for wildlife use, and for pulpwood.**

# Pictures of Balsam Fir