

TREE VARIETIES

Species of Trees and Their Characteristics

Austrian Pine

This very long needled pine, also known as black pine, in the past were grown extensively for Christmas trees, however they have lost popularity in recent years. Needles are long, stiff, round and grow in bundles. The darker green color and heavy thick branches, spaced at wide intervals, attract buyers with lots of space and large heavy ornaments. Needle retention is very good. This variety is more difficult to find today.

Scotch Pine

Has been the most popular Christmas tree in Ohio-this pine has dark to medium green color with firm branches. Needle retention is very good. Needles range from 1.5" to 3" long and grow in clusters of two. Depending on shearing, this tree can be very full. It is found statewide and is easy to decorate.

Eastern White Pine

This fluffy looking Christmas tree with its bright green color and excellent needle retention make it a popular tree. The needles are long, soft and grow in clusters of five. The tree has soft pliable branches and extremely heavy ornaments may pull the branches out of shape. If sheared closely, and long ornament hooks are used this fragrant soft tree is friendly to young fingers and a full looking tree.

Red Pine

Red pine, a tree native to areas of northeast and north central United States and southeastern Canada, was commonly used as a Christmas tree during the first half of the century throughout its natural range but today it is found only occasionally in Christmas tree plantations. It's 4" to 6" long, medium to dark green, somewhat brittle needles are attached to moderately stiff branches in groups of two. Because of their natural growth habit and because they are commonly sheared relatively light, red pine tend to produce a more open Christmas tree than many of the other pines. However, because they retain their needles for 4 or 5 years they still appear moderately dense. Needle retention of cut red pine is excellent.

Southwestern White Pine

Southwestern white pine, also called border pine or Mexican white pine, is a native of the southwestern United States and northern Mexico. Its 1.5"to 3.5" long, dark green to blue-green needles are attached to branches in groups of five. Southwestern white pine is similar to the much more common eastern white pine but has shorter needles which are commonly retained for three or more years (compared to one or two years for eastern white pine) and stiffer branches providing better support for ornaments. Its natural growth habit allows it to be sheared to a variety of densities from quite open to extremely dense. Though grown by only a few Ohio Christmas tree growers, southwestern white pine is an attractive Christmas tree with very good cut tree needle retention.

Canaan Fir

Canaan fir also called West Virginia Balsam Fir is a genetic cross of the northern balsam fir from the northern United States and Canada and the Fraser balsam fir from the southeastern United States. The blue-green, flatish needles are a silvery color on the underside of the branches. Its fragrance is sweet and spicy like balsam and Fraser fir. Its soft lacing branches are sturdy enough to support ornaments of many sizes. This variety is grown in Ohio for its tolerance to our heavier clay based soils. Needle retention is very good for this water loving tree.

Balsam Fir

Balsam Fir, a tree native to areas of northeast and north central United States and much of eastern Canada, is widely grown as a Christmas tree throughout its native range. Its .75" to 1.25" long needles are flattened in cross-section (do not roll easily between fingers), have blunt tips and are attached individually to the twigs. Needle color is generally dark green with two wide bands on the lower surface. Balsam fir makes an extremely attractive Christmas tree, producing a pleasant balsam aroma and having the layered appearance commonly associated with traditional Christmas trees. Branches are relatively stiff, capable of supporting numerous ornaments. Needle retention of fresh cut trees is good. Because of its susceptibility to late spring frosts, balsam fir is generally grown by only a few Christmas tree growers in the northern part of Ohio.

Fraser Fir

Fraser fir is the balsam fir of the southeastern United States, grown on well drained but fairly moist soils. Its dark blue-green needles are flat in appearance attached singly to its branches. These sturdy and symmetrically branched trees have a distinct blue/silver color on the underside their needles. This fragrant tree has excellent needle retention and is considered the 'cadillac' of cut Christmas trees. If the grower has the correct soils and drainage, this tree can be grown in Ohio producing an excellent classic Christmas tree.

Douglas Fir

This green to blue-green tree has soft needles about 1" long. The flat green needles are attached to the branches singly. Although the branches are soft and pliable, its growth habit is very full giving the decorator a multitude of branches for placing ornaments. Its distinctive feature is its citrus scent—similar to lemons and oranges. This species normally grows in northern United States (east and west) at higher elevations than in Ohio. This makes this early budding tree sensitive to our early spring frosts. Needle retention is very good—an excellent fragrant Christmas tree. (It's not a true fir.)

Concolor Fir

Also known as white fir, this long-needled fir has round 1.5" to 2.5" long silvery-blue needles singly attached to the branches in an upright manner. This species normally grows in high elevations in the mountain ranges on the west coast. This early budding fir is sensitive to our early spring frosts. It prefers well drained but moist soil. Concolor fir grow with vigor and will accept moderate to severe shearing to control the growth. This layered, slightly wild growing, tree has very good to excellent needle retention. The strong citrus and somewhat soapy scent is unique to this tree.

Colorado Blue Spruce

Blue spruce come in a variety of colors from a light powdery blue to a rich dark blue-green. Its 1" long, round sharp needles are attached singly to heavy branches in a bottle-brush fashion. This tree will accept heavy ornaments, is usually full when kept sheared or it can be layered in appearance to allow spaces for large decorations. Blue spruce have a nice aroma but the needle retention is average.

Norway Spruce

Norway spruce are found throughout the United States. In Ohio it is considered an endemic (or naturally occurring) tree. The shiny dark green needles of this spruce are what makes it the traditional Christmas tree. Its short .50" to .75" needles are attached to the branches singly. This densely branched tree has a traditional fragrance and sturdy branches for ornaments. Most often used as a landscaping tree today, it can still be found as a Christmas tree at some plantations. Needle retention is fair—so make sure this tree has been fresh cut (or you cut it) in mid-December to get the best results in the house.

White Spruce

White spruce have .50" to .75" long needles that have a silvery-blue appearance. The needles are attached singly and lay tightly on the branches. Its sturdy branches lend themselves to heavy ornaments and its full growth habit give many branches to choose from. Like the Norway, this tree is commonly used in landscaping. Not as common as the blue or Norway, the white spruce is best used for short term displays. Needle retention is again fair. Like the Norway—so make sure it is fresh cut (or you cut it) in mid-December for the best results in the house.

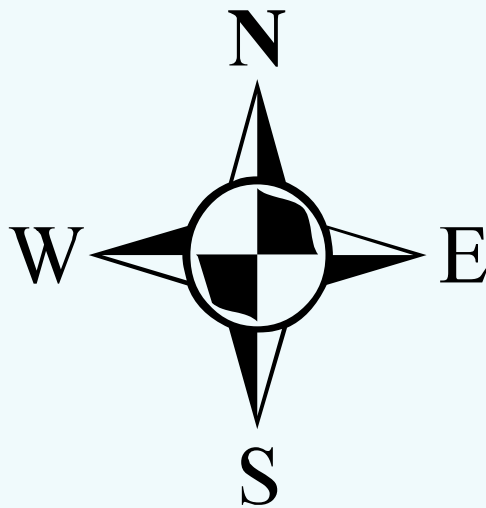
Serbian Spruce

Serbian spruce, a tree native to northern Europe and northern Asia, is more commonly seen as a planted ornamental rather than as a Christmas tree. Its .50" to .75" sharply pointed needles are nearly square in cross-section (allowing them to be easily rolled between fingers) and are attached individually to the twigs. Needle color is medium to dark green with two very distinct bands on the lower surface giving the tree a silvery appearance. Serbian spruce makes an attractive Christmas tree, though the needle retention of cut trees is only average.

# CHRISTMAS TREE FARMS

## OF

# FAIRFIELD COUNTY



### 10 "QUICK" TIPS ON SELECTING A TREE AT A RETAIL LOT

Use the practical tips to be a more informed consumer and to ensure a great experience with your Real Tree:

1. Be sure you know what size (height and width) you need before heading to the retail lot.
2. If you want the same species you know or have always used, great. If you want to try a different species, browse the NCTA website [www.realchristmastrees.org](http://www.realchristmastrees.org) to become familiar with the species popular in your area before heading to the retail lot.
3. Go to a retail lot that is well-lit and stores trees in a shaded area.
4. Often, a tree obtained soon after its arrival on the retail lot will be very fresh because it was cut recently. Consumers should ask the retailer when he/she gets the trees: are they delivered once at the beginning of the season, or does he/she obtain several shipments during the season.
5. Do a freshness test on the trees. Green needles on fresh trees break crisply when bent sharply with the fingers — much like a fresh carrot.
6. Pines have different indicators because of the fibrous nature of their needles compared to firs. The needles on fresh pines do NOT break, unless they are very dry.
7. Look for other indicators of dryness or deterioration: excessive needle loss, discolored foliage, musty odor, needle pliability, and wrinkled bark. A good rule-of-thumb is, when in doubt about the freshness of a tree, select another one. If none of the trees on the lot look fresh, go to another lot.
8. Some species last longer and remain fresh longer than others in different climates. Ask your retailer which tree performs best in your climate.

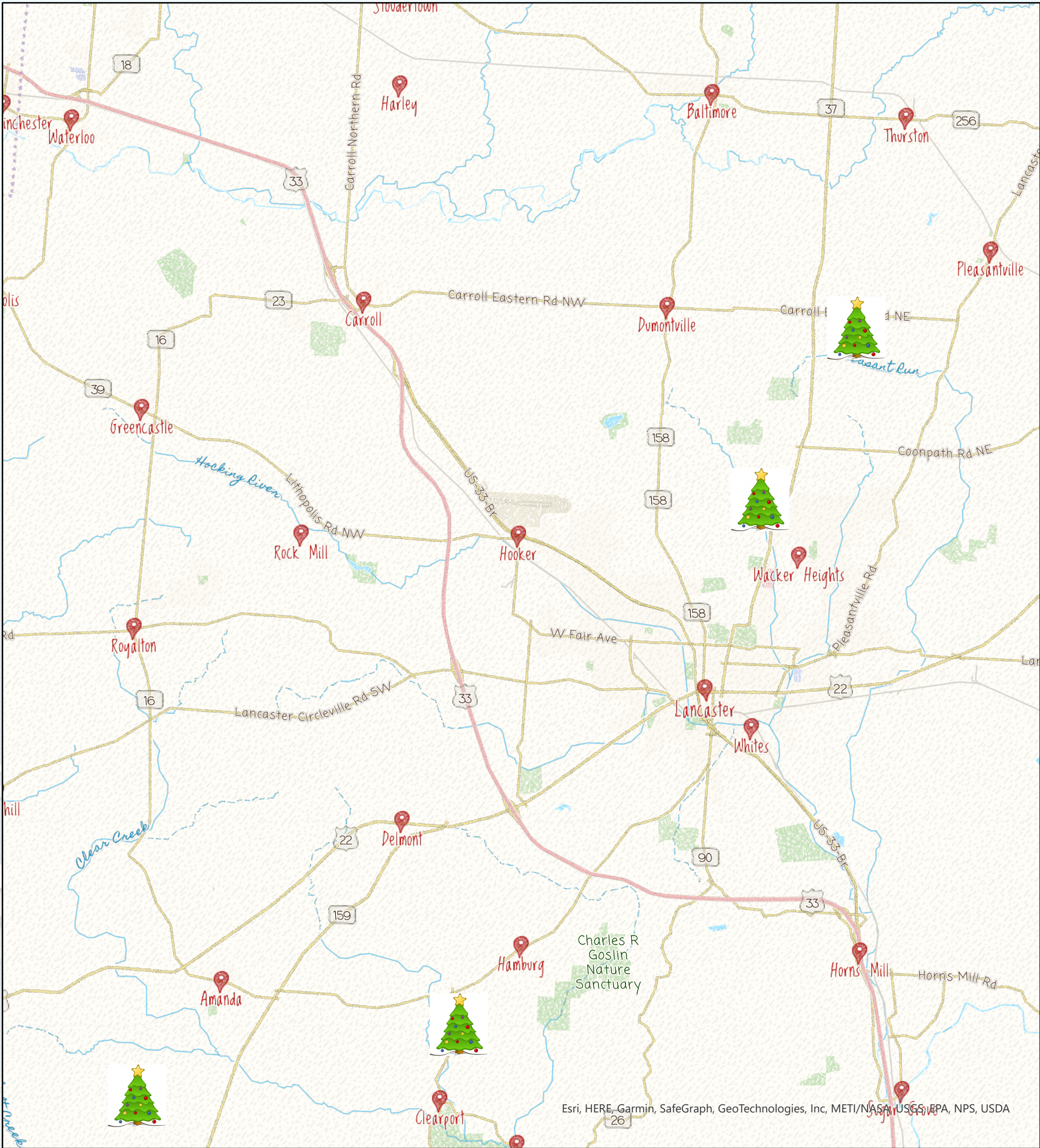
### CHRISTMAS TREE CARE

#### Caring for Your Fresh Cut Christmas Tree

*When a Christmas tree is cut, over half of its weight is water. With proper care, you can maintain the quality of your displayed trees.*

Below are a number of tips relating to the care of displayed trees:

1. Displaying trees in water in a traditional reservoir type stand is the most effective way of maintaining their freshness and minimizing needle loss problems.
2. Make a fresh cut to remove about a 1/2-inch thick disk of wood from the base of the trunk before putting the tree in the stand. Make the cut perpendicular to the stem axis. Don't cut the trunk at an angle, or into a v-shape, which makes it far more difficult to hold the tree in the stand and also reduces the amount of water available to the tree.
3. Once home, place the tree in water as soon as possible. Most species can go 6 to 8 hours after cutting the trunk and still take up water. Don't bruise the cut surface or get it dirty.
4. If needed, trees can be temporarily stored for several days in a cool location. Place the freshly cut trunk in a bucket that is kept full of water.
5. To display the trees indoors, use a stand with an adequate water holding capacity for the tree. As a general rule, stands should provide 1 quart of water per inch of stem diameter. Devices are available that help maintain a constant water level in the stand.
6. Use a stand that fits your tree. Avoid whittling the sides of the trunk down to fit a stand. The outer layers of wood are the most efficient in taking up water and should not be removed.
7. Keep displayed trees away from sources of heat (fireplaces, heaters, heat vents, direct sunlight). Lowering the room temperature will slow the drying process, resulting in less water consumption each day.
8. The temperature of the water used to fill the stand is not important and does not affect water uptake.
9. Check the stand daily to make sure that the level of water does not go below the base of the tree. With many stands, there can still be water in the stand even though the base of the tree is no longer submerged in water.
10. Drilling a hole in the base of the trunk does not improve water uptake.
11. Use of lights that produce low heat, such as miniature lights, will reduce drying of the tree.
12. Always inspect light sets prior to placing them on the tree. If worn, replace with a new set.
13. Do not overload electrical circuits.
14. Always turn off the tree lights when leaving the house or when going to bed.
15. Monitor the tree for freshness. After Christmas or if the tree is dry, remove it from the house.
16. Go to [www.realchristmastrees.org](http://www.realchristmastrees.org) and type in your ZIP code to find a recycling program near you.



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