

# *Pinus clausa*: Sand Pine<sup>1</sup>

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson<sup>2</sup>

## Introduction

This native North American pine is usually seen as a scrubby tree, capable of reaching 100 feet in height but more often seen 15 to 40 feet tall, with a slow growth rate. The supple, evergreen leaves and the plant's ability to thrive in almost any soil make Sand Pine a good choice for use as a Christmas tree, with proper shearing. The 2 to 3.5-inch-long, spiny cones persist for quite a while on the tree, often becoming embedded in the wood of the twigs.

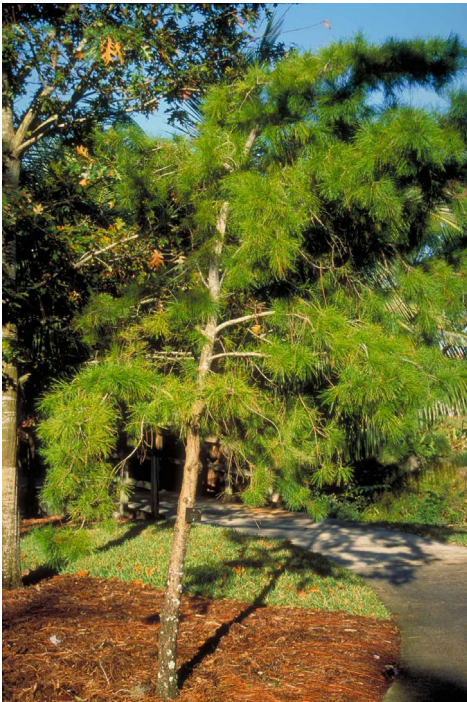


Figure 1. Mature *Pinus clausa*: Sand Pine  
Credits: Ed Gilman

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Pinus clausa*

**Pronunciation:** PIE-nus KLAU-suh

**Common name(s):** Sand Pine

**Family:** *Pinaceae*

**USDA hardiness zones:** 7A through 10B (Fig. 2)

**Origin:** native to North America

**Invasive potential:** weedy native

**Uses:** specimen; shade; reclamation; highway median; Christmas tree

**Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree

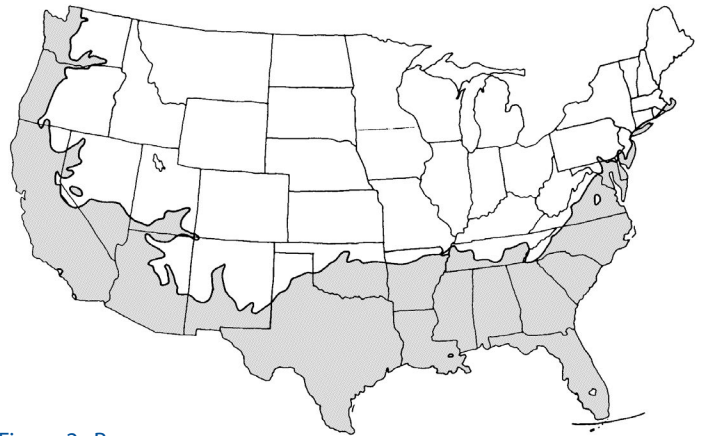


Figure 2. Range

## Description

**Height:** 25 to 40 feet

**Spread:** 15 to 25 feet

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2. Edward F. Gilman, professor, Environmental Horticulture Department; Dennis G. Watson, former associate professor, Agricultural Engineering Department, UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

**Crown uniformity:** irregular  
**Crown shape:** oval  
**Crown density:** open  
**Growth rate:** slow  
**Texture:** fine

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate (Fig. 3)  
**Leaf type:** simple  
**Leaf margin:** entire  
**Leaf shape:** needle-like (filiform)  
**Leaf venation:** parallel  
**Leaf type and persistence:** fragrant, evergreen, needled evergreen  
**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches  
**Leaf color:** green  
**Fall color:** no color change  
**Fall characteristic:** not showy

## Flower

**Flower color:** yellow  
**Flower characteristics:** not showy

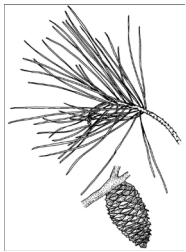


Figure 3. Flower

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** oval, cone  
**Fruit length:** 1 to 3 inches  
**Fruit covering:** dry or hard  
**Fruit color:** brown  
**Fruit characteristics:** attracts squirrels/mammals; not showy; fruit/leaves a litter problem

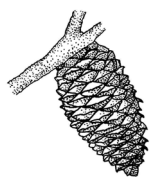


Figure 4. Fruit

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** branches droop; not showy; typically one trunk; thorns  
**Pruning requirement:** little required

**Breakage:** susceptible to breakage  
**Current year twig color:** brown  
**Current year twig thickness:** medium  
**Wood specific gravity:** 0.48

## Culture

**Light requirement:** full sun, partial sun or partial shade  
**Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; loam; slightly alkaline; acidic; well-drained  
**Drought tolerance:** high  
**Aerosol salt tolerance:** high

## Other

**Roots:** not a problem  
**Winter interest:** no  
**Outstanding tree:** no  
**Ozone sensitivity:** unknown  
**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** resistant  
**Pest resistance:** resistant to pests/diseases

## Use and Management

The trunks on Sand Pine are rarely straight. The tree usually grows with a portion of the crown missing or with a lean to one side. This may contribute to the unpopularity of the tree in the landscape trade. However, this attribute can make it well suited for planting as an accent in any large scale landscape. It is especially useful and attractive when planted in a lawn area as a single specimen. It certainly has its place in reclamation sites as a colonizer of poor soils. The tolerance to dry, sandy soils should make this tree adaptable to conditions created near asphalt and other hot areas in urban landscapes.

Sand Pine should be grown in full sun on any well-drained soil. The tree is highly drought- and salt-tolerant.

Propagation is by seed.

## Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.