

# *Tsuga canadensis* 'Sargentii': Weeping Canadian Hemlock<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

Weeping Canadian hemlock may be one of the most beautiful conifers, with its soft green needles attached to gently weeping branches reaching to the ground. Specimen trees look their best with lower branches left on and touching the ground. The strong, conical form typical of the species is completely lost in this cultivar. The tree is usually trained to grow several feet tall then allowed to spread up to two times its height. In 80 years the tree may be 12 feet tall and 25 feet wide. It makes one of the most impressive accents or specimens of any tree available in this country. Unfortunately, infestations of woolly adelgid have been severe in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania (and other areas) and this may limit their use in these regions.

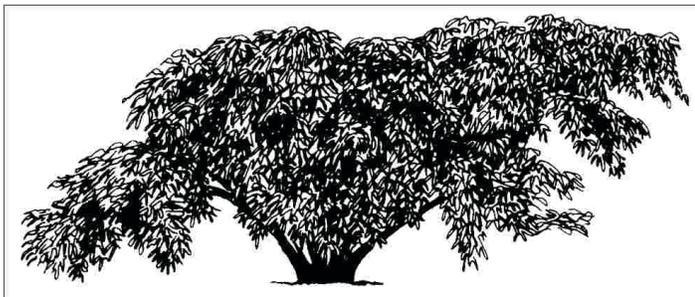


Figure 1. Mature *Tsuga canadensis* 'Sargentii': weeping Canadian hemlock

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Tsuga canadensis*

**Pronunciation:** TSOO-guh kan-uh-DEN-sis

**Common name(s):** Weeping Canadian hemlock, weeping eastern hemlock

**Family:** *Pinaceae*

**USDA hardiness zones:** 4A through 7A (Fig. 2)

**Origin:** native to North America

**Invasive potential:** little invasive potential

**Uses:** specimen; container or planter

**Availability:** not native to North America



Figure 2. Range

## Description

**Height:** 10 to 12 feet

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**Spread:** 20 to 30 feet  
**Crown uniformity:** irregular  
**Crown shape:** weeping  
**Crown density:** dense  
**Growth rate:** slow  
**Texture:** fine

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate (Fig. 3)  
**Leaf type:** simple  
**Leaf margin:** entire  
**Leaf shape:** linear  
**Leaf venation:** parallel  
**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen, needled evergreen, fragrant  
**Leaf blade length:** less than 2 inches  
**Leaf color:** green  
**Fall color:** no color change  
**Fall characteristic:** not showy



Figure 3. Foliage

## Flower

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

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** oval, cone  
**Fruit length:** .5 to 1 inch  
**Fruit covering:** dry or hard  
**Fruit color:** brown  
**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; not showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** branches droop; not showy; typically multi-trunked; thorns  
**Pruning requirement:** needed for strong structure  
**Breakage:** resistant  
**Current year twig color:** gray, brown  
**Current year twig thickness:** thin  
**Wood specific gravity:** 0.40

## Culture

**Light requirement:** full sun, partial sun, partial shade, shade tolerant  
**Soil tolerances:** sand; loam; acidic; well-drained  
**Drought tolerance:** moderate  
**Aerosol salt tolerance:** low

## Other

**Roots:** not a problem  
**Winter interest:** yes  
**Outstanding tree:** yes  
**Ozone sensitivity:** unknown  
**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** resistant  
**Pest resistance:** sensitive to pests/diseases

## Use and Management

Hemlock transplants well balled-in-burlap and will grow in moderately dry or moist, acidic soil but prefers moist, well-drained sites. Root rot and bark splitting are common on sites which are constantly wet. Some die-back can be expected after transplanting if irrigation is not managed just right. Best growth is in partial shade in the mountainous valleys but specimens grow well in full sun in the middle and northern part of their range. Perfect when partially shaded from other trees where soil is cool and some sun sneaks through during portions of the day. It is not for planting in a lawn in competition with turf unless turf is eliminated beneath the canopy. Plants grown in full shade will be thin and will not produce the specimen effect so characteristic of weeping hemlock in full sun or partial shade. This is a picky plant but well worth the extra effort to cultivate it.

Other cultivars include: 'Bennett'—globose habit, branches weeping at the tips, dark green, grow in partial shade, three-foot height and spread; 'White Gentsch'—a rounded, flattened dwarf, the foliage is white at the tips, four feet high and wide.

## Pests

Woolly adelgid, scales, weevils, bagworm, mites, sapsucker woodpecker can infest hemlock. Woolly adelgid and scale infestations can devastate a planting.

## Diseases

Needle rust, cankers, and non-parasitic bark splitting on heavy, poorly drained soil can cause some problems.