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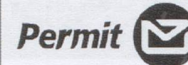
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FLORA IN SWITZERLAND

Abies alba: Weisstanne; European silver fir

Abies alba, commonly known as the European silver fir, is a fir native to Europe. It is a large evergreen coniferous tree growing to 40-50m tall and with a trunk diameter of up to 1.5m. The largest measured tree was 68 m tall and had a trunk diameter of 3.8 m. It occurs at altitudes of 300m-1,700m, on mountains with a rainfall of over 1,000mm.



The leaves are needle-like, flattened, glossy dark green above, and with two greenish white bands below. The cones are **upright**, 9-17cm long.

Silver Fir is the species first used as a Christmas tree, but has been largely replaced by Nordmann Fir, which has denser, more attractive foliage.

Nordmann Fir (*Abies nordmanniana*) is a fir native to the mountains south and east of the Black Sea. It occurs at altitudes of between 900m-2,200m on mountains with a rainfall of over 1,000 mm.

The leaves are needle-like, flattened, glossy dark green above, with two blue-white bands below. The cones are **upright**.



Nordmann Fir is one of the most important species grown for Christmas trees, being favoured for its attractive foliage, with needles that are not sharp, and do not drop readily when the tree dries out.

It is also a popular ornamental tree in parks and large gardens.

Picea abies: Fichte, Rottanne; Norway Spruce

Picea abies (previously known as *Picea excelsa*) is a large evergreen coniferous tree growing to 35-55 m tall and with a trunk diameter of up to 1.5 m. The shoots are orange-brown and hairless. The leaves are needle-like, 12-24mm long, quadrangular in cross-section, and dark green on all four sides. The



cones **hang down**, are 9-17cm long and have bluntly to sharply triangular-pointed scale tips. They are green or reddish, maturing brown. The Norway Spruce is one of the most widely

planted spruces, both in and outside of its native range, and one of the most economically important coniferous species in Europe. It is used in forestry for timber and paper production, and as an ornamental tree in parks and gardens. It is also widely planted for use as a Christmas tree. It can grow fast when young, up to 1m per year for the first 25 years under good conditions, but becomes slower once over around 20 m tall.

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