

TWO OF FOUR LARCH TREES FOUND IN STATE OF OREGON

Recognition Is Easily Made in Autumn Due to Lack of Foliage and Presence of Cones.



Western Larch in Wenaha Forest, Blue Mts. of Union County.
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OF THE four larches found in North America only two occur in Oregon—the western larch extensively and the woolly larch in the Mount Hood regions. Since larches lose their leaves in autumn, as the broad-leaved trees, and yet produce cones in common with all conifers, it is not at all difficult to recognize the Oregon larches by this association of the absence of leaves with the presence of cones.

The western larch, larix occidentalis Nuttall, is also called the red American larch, great western larch, and western tamarack, although commonly spoken of as larch or tamarack. It occurs within the Columbia River drainage basin, at elevations of 2000 to 6000 feet. Its range lies between the western slope of the continental divide in Montana and southern British Columbia to Southern Oregon and on the eastern slope of the Cascade mountains in Oregon. In Oregon it is found mainly in the Blue and Yellow mountains of Eastern Oregon and on the east slope of the Cascades, crossing the divide only for short distances at various places.

Western Larch Largest.
The western larch is the largest known species of larch in the world. It produces tapering trunks three or four feet in diameter, clear of branches for 60 to 100 feet or more, which together with short, narrow crowns of comparatively few short horizontal branches, gradually taper to slender points at from 100 to 150 feet—(Fig. 1). Trees 200 hundred feet high are usually five to eight inches in diameter. In the open the branches often reach almost to the ground. It attains its largest size in the Bitterroot mountains of northern Idaho.

It requires from 250 to 300 years to produce a trunk 16 to 20 inches in diameter. Merchants of 12 inches in diameter is attained in about 100 years in the Priest river drainage basin of northern Idaho. The larch as a tree is a rather slow but persistent grower. The larch is long-lived, living between 300 and 500 years, as a rule, while the largest trees reach 600 and 700 years of age.

The bark is very thick near the base of the tree—three to six inches—deeply furrowed, gradually becoming less deeply furrowed and thinner at 20 or more feet above the ground—(Fig. 2). The thick bark of the tree affords excellent protection to the tree against fire, and many of the large trees show that they have successfully passed through several forest fires.

Branches Are Slender.
The branches are rather slender, but not graceful, owing to the presence of short, stumpy foliar branches, which support the clusters of leaves. Fine and larch are alike in having two kinds of branches—long branches becoming limbs, and short foliar branches upon which may be found, in the spring and summer, from 14 flat, about 30 feet stiff, sharp-pointed, flat, triangular leaves. The larch is one of the earliest deciduous trees to display new growth in the spring, leaves appearing toward the last of April. They are pale yellowish-green and needle-like becoming bright yellow lemon late in the fall, and falling during October. This marked difference in the color of the leaves enables the traveler to distinguish the larch from other conifers readily. It may be picked out while passing by on the train, as, for example, along the Oregon-Washington, Railroad & Navigation railroad at the top of the Blue mountain grade near Meacham. They may be seen also along the Sumpter valley and other mountain ranges.

The cones are small (1 to 1½ inches long), stand erect, mature in one season and ripen in August. The presence of the exserted three-pointed bracts is a feature in common with the Douglas fir and the true or balsam fir. They open soon after maturity and fall from the trees by the end of October or November. Larches rarely produce seed before 25 years, but become prolific seeders at 40 to 50 years. Like many other conifers, such as the pines and firs, the seeds bear wings, which materially assist in dissemination. Falling from the top of such tall trees, they are rapidly scattered, often falling upon the snow, over which they are some times blown for a considerable distance. The cone scales open very readily in dry weather, but close during rain, so that the duration of the period of seed dispersion varies to some extent with local climatic conditions.

The seeds of the western larch are rather exacting as to moisture requirements. They require considerable moisture for germination, which accounts for their occurrence in high mountain valleys and slopes and their predominance on many of the north slopes.

Considerable Water Needed.
Although western larch demands considerable water, the soil in which it grows must be well drained. In relatively dry regions, like the Blue mountains of Eastern Oregon, the larch attains its best development in moist draws or in fertile valleys not parallel with the direction of the prevailing winds. The larch may grow well in the mineral soils of burned-over areas, where it is likely to compete only with lodge-pole pine for dominance and where the dominance depends upon which tree started first. If lodge-pole pine and western larch have an equal start, the more rapid growth of the larch assures its establishment, while the light color of the foliage and sparsely scattered leaves of the larch do not injure the development of the lodge-pole pine. If the lodge-pole pine is the earlier to start, its denser shade is likely to crowd out the more intolerant larch.

The western larch sometimes grows in pure stands, but usually is mixed with the western hemlock and Douglas fir. Western larch and western yellow pine are practically the only woods used for building purposes in some parts of Northern Idaho and Western Montana and Eastern Washington. However, the wood of the western larch is not found in the market to any great extent outside of its geographical range. Its use is therefore largely confined to the states of Oregon, Washington, Montana and Idaho. There is considerable wastage in lumbering, so that the western larch yields an average of about ten per cent of clear lumber. Western larch is used in making railroad ties, flooring, ceiling and molding, lath, inside finishing, veneer. It takes a high polish and stains well. It is especially valuable for round and pole timbers.

Some of the western larch should not be confused with the wood of the noble fir. Lumbermen frequently refer to the wood of the noble fir as "larch." This is an erroneous application of the term and its use should not be continued, on account of its correct application only to the western larch and eastern larch.

Coffin of St. Elizabeth Is Robbed of Its Jewels.

Legend of Countess von Thuringen Relates Modern Miracle.

MARBURG, Jugo-Slavia, Dec. 18.—The wonderful coffin of St. Elizabeth in the church of that name has been robbed of many of its finest jewels. Twelve very large pearls and 193 precious stones of great value were purloined from the encoffered body. Many valuable robes also were stolen. In life St. Elizabeth was the Countess von Thuringen von Wartburg, and was known for her charities. Against the will of her husband, it was her custom to slip from the castle Wartburg and carry food to the poor of the town. The legend goes that on one occasion he caught her bearing a great basket and fled back from the battlefield in the Argonne exploded while he was hunting. Torment served with the 119th field artillery.

War Veteran Killed in Accident.
GILMAN, Mont.—Charles L. Torrence, world war veteran of Simms, Mont., was accidentally shot and killed recently when a pistol he brought back from the battlefield in the Argonne exploded while he was hunting. Torrence served with the 119th field artillery.

Xavier Renais Suicide.
DILLON, Mont.—Xavier Renais, one of the first gold seekers in Montana, ended his own life here recently. Renais had lived in Montana for 55 years and is said to have made and lost a fortune like many other miners of the early gold days of the state.

For some months the finest of these weaves have been on exhibition in the Belvedere palace here, exposed for the first time to the public. Always they have been kept either in the Hofburg or Schenbrunn palaces, brought out on rare state occasions in the days of the monarchy to decorate the great salons. The largest of them barely find space on the sidewalks of the vast apartments in the Belvedere, where daily hundreds of persons patronize the small admission fee to feast on the wealth of color, while in every room artists at easels copy them.

Hapsburg Tapestries to Be Pawned to Buy Bread.

Glories of Ancient House of Austria Will Feed Starving People of New Republic.

VIENNA, Dec. 18.—When by purchase, gift and inheritance the House of Hapsburg acquired the 900 or more tapestries comprising the most superb collection in the world, its members hardly foresaw that some day they would be pawned to buy bread for a succeeding republic. The reparations commission having given its consent, the government is now trying to raise enough money on these tapestries to purchase 50,000 tons of flour against the imminent exhaustion of the supply on hand. The bread ration has been reduced to 20 per cent wheat flour content, with 50 per cent cornmeal and 30 per cent rye. The best that can be said of the resulting bread is that a very hungry person can eat a little of it. It is understood that a movement

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Cough Dislodges Lizard From Man's Stomach.

Man of Reptile Believed to Have Been Swallowed While Drinking Water From Ditch.

BOISE, Idaho, Dec. 18.—(Special.)—Lizards are not very good company, especially when they are carried in the stomach. This is the testimony of Roy Gordon, who resides near Riggs, Idaho. He ought to know; he carried one along with him for some years. Gordon is well known to federal officials. He was arrested some time ago for operating an illicit still. Because of his physical condition he was given a light sentence. It was thought he would not live long and that he had consumption. But Gordon did not have consumption. He had a lizard.

A few days ago federal officials have been informed. Gordon had a severe coughing spell. His wife gave him milk to drink. Violent vomiting

followed and the lizard made its appearance. It is supposed that Gordon swallowed a lizard egg while drinking out of a ditch and that it was hatched in his stomach.

WATCH GIVEN BY TENANTS

Landlord Who Never Raised Rent Has Many Friends.

LOS ANGELES, Cal.—F. W. Blanchard got a gold watch as a gift from his 60 tenants a few days ago. Reason: In 21 years as a landlord, Mr. Blanchard never raised the rent. Mr. Blanchard had a long lease on a downtown property, arranged into a couple of public halls and a group of studios. When his tenants heard recently that his lease had expired and that another man got the renewal, they invited Mr. Blanchard to a farewell party which was meant to be a gay affair. Then they gave him the watch and their spokesman sobbed. Mr. Blanchard sobbed; everybody sobbed and then the gaiety was resumed.

D'Annunzio's Troops Show Devotion to Leader.

Striking Demonstration Given at Second Victory Anniversary.

FLORENCE, Dec. 18.—A striking demonstration of the devotion of D'Annunzio's troops to their leader was given here on the occasion of the celebration of the second anniversary of the victory of Italian arms in the war. The poet "commander" as everyone calls D'Annunzio here, occupied a box in the Fanthe theater, where the celebration was held. His arrival was heralded by a bugle call and his appearance was a signal for a thunderstorm of applause and cries of "Viva il Comandante."

When two others had addressed the Florentines who crowded the theater another blast of bugles made every one turn to the box where D'Annunzio stood in the uniform of an Italian cavalry officer. It would be a hopeless task to attempt to give a pale idea of the enthusiasm of the crowd.

Everyone rose to his feet and the theater resounded with the D'Annunzio cry of "Eia, Eia, Alala," from thousands of throats while flowers rained upon D'Annunzio from all sides.

Though his proclamations usually are written in a poetical and somewhat bombastic style, his speech consisted of the simplest words. He declared that Fiume alone really celebrated the Italian victory while Rome celebrated the "assassination of victory." He asked his men to keep ready as, sooner than was generally expected, he would take them with him to Rome. At these words the enthusiasm was renewed, the people waved handkerchiefs, hats, sticks and weapons in the air amid cries of: "To Rome, to Rome, Eia, Eia, Alala, Rome, Rome," while the bombardment of flowers was redoubled.

D'Annunzio's exit from the theater was the occasion for fresh demonstrations of loyalty. His motorcar was surrounded by the crowd and obliged to proceed at a foot pace while his men fought among themselves to approach and touch him. He was escorted all the way back to his residence by an admiring multitude.