

## Aromatic Red Cedar - *Juniperus virginiana*



Conifer. Height 40 to 60 feet. Trunk diameter 2 to 4 feet. Usually a small tree, it has been known to grow 90 feet high with a trunk circumference of 13 feet. Distribution; Nova Scotia south to Georgia along the Atlantic Coast west to the Mississippi River states. It is the state tree of Tennessee. The eastern or "aromatic" red cedar is the species used for moth-proof storage chests and clothes closets. It is

not to be confused with the huge timber species of the west coast: western red cedar and incense cedar.

A firm, stable softwood, the timber of this red cedar is highly prized for its beautiful, warm, deep, rich, red color and its most distinctive, everlasting, aromatic perfume. The wood is light and easy to work. It has numerous knots that make a handsome distinctive pattern. Otherwise it is straight and close grained. Due to its natural beauty and scent, it is never painted or stained. The wood is enduring - it is strong and durable. Its natural oils contain the secret of its success



Where aromatic red cedar is concerned, the knottier the wood the better. The many knots indicate the exceptionally high content of the aromatic oils that distinguish this wood from all others. The more oil the stronger the scent; the stronger the scent the deader the moth! (And, of course, the more wonderful smelling the stored woolen clothes.) This same oil makes cedar decay and insect resistant and waterproof; the perfect wood of choice for long term use. The wood also has low shrinkage and is very stable once applied. Despite its relatively high cost, aromatic red cedar is worth the cost for the service it performs. It is typically available as veneer and lumber. The trunks of the majority of this red cedar are used for fence posts. The water resistant lumber is used in greenhouse construction and for window sills and small boat decks. It is most commonly associated with cedar blanket chests, wardrobes, clothes closet interiors, storage room paneling and dresser

drawer linings. It is also used for scientific instruments and novelties. The pencil in your hand or behind your ear is made of red cedar woods. This soft but firm, straight, close-grained wood is designed to sharpen perfectly and easily. Also, the shavings smell nice. Isn't nature grand!