

FACT SHEET

NATIVE PLANT SPECIES OF NORFOLK ISLAND

Norfolk Island Pine

Araucaria heterophylla

From the *Araucariaceae* family this species is endemic to Norfolk Island.

Description

The Norfolk Pine can grow to heights of up to 70m. Trunk and bark can differ slightly from tree to tree but are usually a dark brown/deep red colour. Needles are long, dark green and waxy with small scales that spiral from base to tip.

Young/juvenile trees have branches that are usually symmetrical and point in an upwards V. As they mature (circa. 35+ years), their branching system grows more complex and a-symmetrical. Older trees have branches that droop downwards.

Seeds grow in almost spherical cones that are made up of seeds and held in place by overlapping papery wings. Male cones containing pollen are obscure, (4-6cm long) and narrow, looking like a small bulbous tip on the end of the needles.

Female cones are much more obvious. Immature female cones can fall to the ground on occasion, otherwise seeds mature and disperse from high in the branches. Seedlings emerge with 2 pairs of V-shaped leaves, followed by the first true needles.

Distribution

Island-wide.



Norfolk Island Pine

Araucaria heterophylla

Page 2

Growing conditions

Can tolerate a wide range of growing conditions. Can be found growing naturally on exposed and eroded cliffs, as well as throughout valleys, paddocks and gardens. When planting pines, it is best to choose areas with moderate sun and wind protection, or provide protection with pallets and/or shade cloth until trees establish.

Propagation

Collect seed between May-July. The pine has what is known as 'mast years' or 'mast seeding' every 3 to 5 years. Mast years produce much larger amounts of seed than the in-between years. Seeds can be readily propagated at home.

Look-alikes

A few specimens of Bunya Pine (*Araucaria budwillii*) are present on Norfolk. Though belonging to the same genus, the Bunya Pine, which is native to Australia, has sharp needles and sparser foliage. Cones are also much larger. In other parts of the world,

Norfolk Pines are often mistaken for New Caledonia or Cooks Pine (*Araucaria columnaris*). To the untrained eye they may be difficult to tell apart, however Norfolk Pines tend to have a more triangular-tapered shape, whereas New Caledonian Pines are a similar width along most of their length.



Further information

For further information about propagation of Norfolk Island native plants and seeds, follow the link to Norfolk Island National Park website below:

<https://www.nespthreatenedspecies.edu.au/media/nlohxopn/a-guide-to-propagating-norfolk-island-seeds-and-plants-2021.pdf>