

# Pinus ponderosa

## COMMON NAMES

ponderosa pine, western yellow pine

## BIOSTATUS

Exotic

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Gymnosperms

## FLOWER COLOURS

No flowers

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Medium to large tree, (exceeding 30 m in cultivation). **Needles** are 25 cm long, rigid, dull-green, in bunches of 3, projecting forward. male cones are purple coloured, up to 2 cm long and in clusters on young shoots. **Female cones** 6–14 × 5–10 cm, egg shaped and each scale has a small spiny tip.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Long needles in clusters of 3. Cones shed annually but leaving basal scales. Similar to *P. taeda* and *P. elliotii* but both of these species shed cones entire, and the cones of *P. ponderosa* are more ovoid.

## HABITAT

Terrestrial.

## GENUS

Pinus

## FAMILY

Pinaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Pinus ponderosa* Douglas ex C.Lawson

## YEAR NATURALISED

1925

## ORIGIN

Western N. America

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Forestry

## LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial; seed is wind dispersed.

## EXTRA INFORMATION

The National Wilding Conifer Control Programme team at Biosecurity New Zealand, a branch of Ministry for Primary Industries, has produced this wilding conifer [quick ID guide](#).



Castle Hill village. May 2010. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Pinus ponderosa. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

**This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC.** 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

## NVS CODE

PINPON

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pinus-ponderosa/>

## PDF DATE

25 May 2026