



Deodar Cedar (*Cedrus deodara*)



Summary:

The deodar cedar (*cedrus deodara*) is a majestic evergreen conifer native to the western Himalayas, including regions of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and northern India. Its name derives from the Sanskrit *devadāru*, meaning “timber of the gods.” This tree is renowned for its graceful, conical form and pendulous branchlets. In its native habitat, it can reach heights of up to 200 feet, but in cultivation, it typically grows between 40 to 60 feet tall with a spread of 20 to 30 feet. The needles are soft, bluish-green to medium green, and arranged in clusters. It produces large, brown, barrel-shaped cones that mature in spring.

Deodar cedars thrive in full sun to partial shade and prefer well-drained soils. They are drought-tolerant once established and are suitable for USDA Hardiness Zones 7 to 9 and Sunset Zones 3–10 and 14–24. Due to their size and form, they are ideal for large landscapes, parks, and estates. However, care should be taken when planting near structures due to their moderate root damage potential.

Ecological importance:

While not native to North America, deodar cedars contribute to urban ecosystems by providing moderate to dense shade, which can reduce urban heat islands. Their seeds attract squirrels,



and the dense foliage offers shelter for various bird species. Additionally, they play a role in carbon sequestration and improving air quality in urban settings.

Fire effects:

Deodar cedars have moderate fire resistance. Their thick bark can protect against low-intensity fires, but the dry fruit and needle litter can pose a fire hazard if not managed properly. In fire-prone areas, it's advisable to maintain a defensible space by removing fallen debris and avoiding planting them too close to structures.

Pests & diseases:

- Resistant to: verticillium wilt
- Susceptible to: beetle borers, phytophthora root rot, and sooty mold

References:

- Cal Poly Urban Forest Ecosystems Institute. SelecTree: [cedrus deodara](#)
- California State University Stanislaus: deodar cedar
- Photo credit: Cal Poly Selectree