

# Black Spruce

*Picea mariana*

## Ecological Facts



Black spruce grows in areas that are cold, wet, and low in nutrients such as bogs and fens. It is believed that the top cluster of branches (the crow's nest) results from squirrels clipping off branches close to the top of the tree to get the cones.

## Commercial Uses



Black spruce wood is used to make pulp, newsprint, and fine papers. Parts of this tree are even used to make sausage casings, explosives, and imitation leather.

## Medicinal Uses



Bits of dry, rotten spruce wood can be wrapped in a piece of caribou hide and pounded to a fine baby powder. The Dene use the powder to prevent chafing and as a deodorant. The Cree use spruce sap to treat infections and stomach aches.

## Traditional Uses



During the fur trade, saplings were used to create snares and metal traps were boiled with a mixture of spruce branches, alder twigs, and beeswax to remove human scent.

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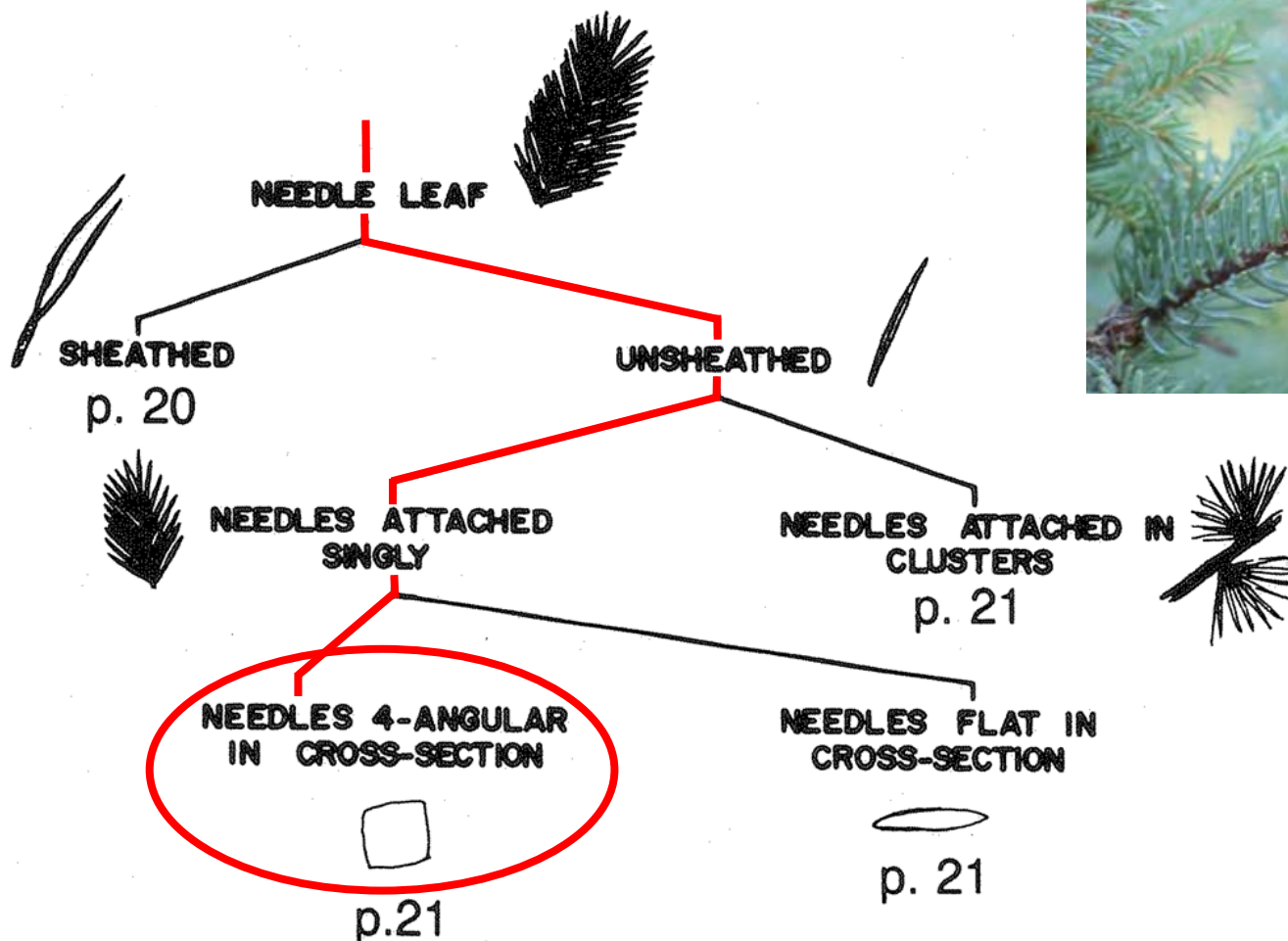
## Distinguishing Features:

- Square needles
- Short uppermost branches clustered in what is called a 'crow's nest'

Crow's nest



# Identification



# Resources

