Araucaria heterophylla

Systematic Position

Kingdom: Plantae

Division: Pinophyta

Class: Pinopsida

Order: Pinales

Family: Araucariaceae

Genus: *Araucaria*

Species*: Araucaria heterophylla*

Popular names: House Pine, Living Christmas Tree, Norfolk Island Pine, monkey-puzzle tree

Nature: Tree, Houseplant

Plant distribution: Endemic distribution occurs in Norfolk Island (in the Pacific Ocean, off Australia's east coast between New Zealand and New Caledonia). It occurs as a cultivated plant in many subtropical and Mediterranean climates. In the U.S. it has been introduced in Florida and coastal southern California.

Gardening notes:

1. Light: It can grow well in full sun to partial shade.
2. Moisture: Grows well in deep sand, but needs reliable water when young The plant is tolerant of salt and wind, making it ideal for coastal situations'
3. Propagation: Seed, Cuttings.

Economic importance:

1. It was at one time heavily exploited for construction

2. A high quality wood, good for turning, it is used extensively by craftspeople in Hawaii

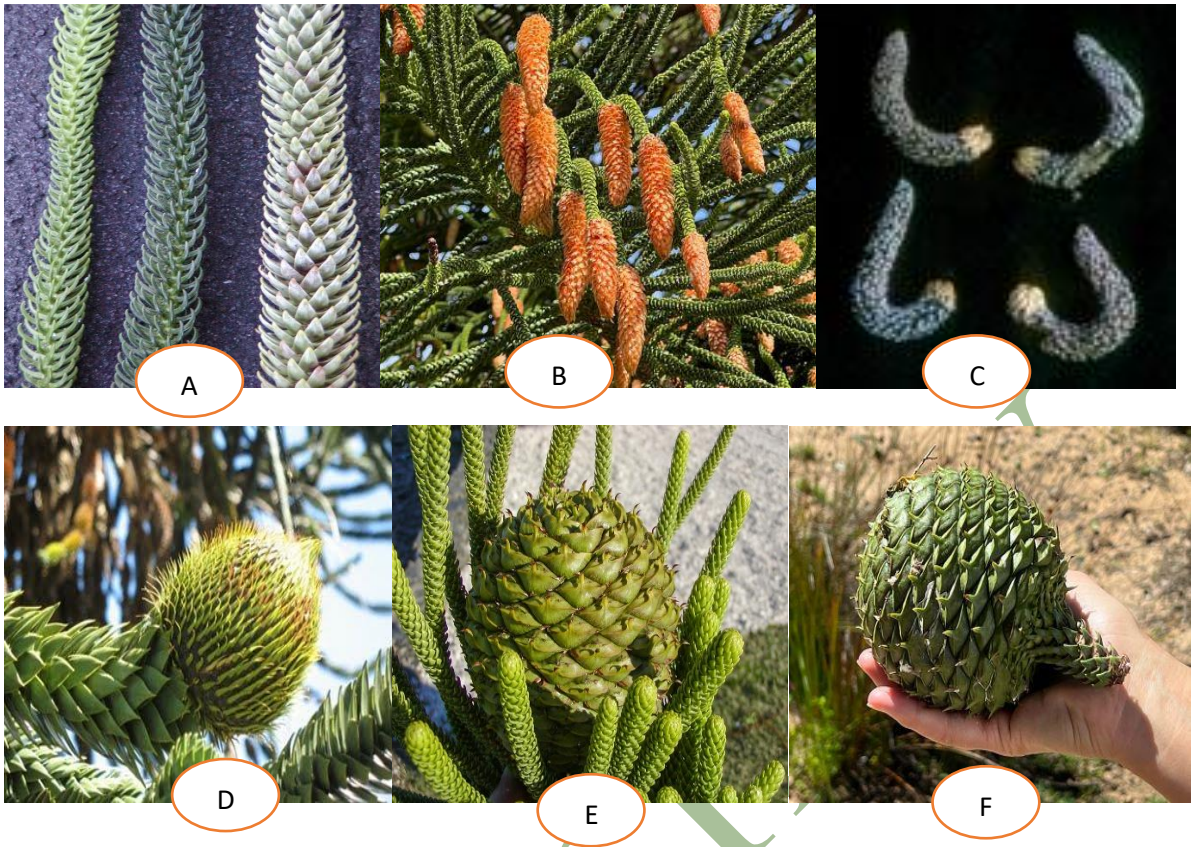
Plant description: Evergreen, mostly dioecious trees with regularly whorled branches.

Stem: This plant has whorled branches with typically five branches per whorl. Hard, gray-brown, resinous; branches whorled, spreading, herringbone, branchlets covered with upturned leaves.

Leaf: Dark green, awl-shaped, lanceolate, 1/2 inch long leaves are arranged in a dense, spiral, scale-like pattern along the stem. Leaves are soft with sharp pointed ends. The leaves turn inward, overlapping in a herringbone pattern and point toward the stem ends.

Fruit: Trees are generally dioecious, having male and female cones on separate trees, however, both male and female cones occasionally appear on the same tree. Spiny, globose female seed cones, weighing 10-15 pounds, require 18 months to mature then drop to the ground where they release the seeds. Male cones terminal and solitary or disposed in clusters, with numerous spirally arranged stamens, anthers 6-8 celled. Female cones globose, ripening in 2-3 years, heavy, milky; scales usually with thin spiny apical umbos, scales thin and somewhat flattened, cones dehiscent at maturity; ovules one per scale. Ovules and seeds united with the scale.

Seed: Seeds usually winged on the edges, sometimes edible. Cotyledons 2-4. Germination with epigeal or hypogeal cotyledons



Figures: (A) Foliage leaf, (B) pollen cone, (C) Mature pollen cone (D) Female Cone (E) ripe cone (F) mature fruit.