

KING PINE CROWNED AS IDAHO STATE TREE

By WOODY ASPEN

Boise, August 7, 1935— The Idaho Legislature has chosen the western white pine to be Idaho's official state tree. Its scientific name, *Pinus monticola*, means "pine of the mountains." It also has a nickname: "King Pine." Folks are asking, "Why the white pine? Why not the Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine or other trees that grow in Idaho's forests?"

Here are some of the reasons:

- The white pine is the most plentiful and valuable type of tree in the moist forests of northern Idaho.
- The white pine is one of the fastest-growing trees. It can grow 2 to 4 feet taller each year.
- It is one of the biggest trees, reaching up to 200 feet tall (as high as a 20-story building), and nearly 7 feet across.
- White pines produce a lot of wood. A single white pine may have enough lumber in it to build a whole house!
- White pine wood has a straight grain. This makes it an excellent wood for building furniture and doors. It also makes nice matchsticks!
- Most importantly, the white pine has brought people and wealth to Idaho. Huge forests of these giant trees started a "timber rush" in Idaho in the early 1900s. Forest land was in high demand. Sawmills were established and communities sprouted up, filled with lumberjacks and millworkers. New businesses provided goods and services, like grocery and hardware stores.



Largest known white pine tree,
felled December, 1911.

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POLICE REPORT

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DEPARTMENT

The Vanishing King! Date: 1950

Authorities want to find out why Idaho's state tree—the western white pine—is disappearing. More than half of the magnificent trees are missing from their former homes. There are several suspects.

The number one suspect, is the white pine blister rust. Blister rust is a fungus that attacks white pine trees. It starts on the needles. Then it works its way into the tree trunk. It kills the tree by cutting off its food supply.

Another suspect is a takeover of the forest by other kinds of trees. Early loggers cut down the biggest white pines for lumber and other wood products. They left behind other kinds of trees. These leftovers created a shady forest. Young hemlock and grand fir trees grow well in the shade. However, there was not enough sunlight for young white pines. Grand fir and hemlock trees have invaded the white pine's territory.

Also suspected is fire prevention and suppression (putting out forest fires). For thousands of years, forest fires were started by lightning or set by people. These fires burned down many trees. That let more sunlight into the forest. This sunlight is exactly what young white pines need to grow quickly. When people began preventing and putting out forest fires, many forests grew thick with trees. Not much sunlight made it to the forest floor. Shady forests do not allow the young sun-loving white pines to grow.



WANTED FOR MURDER

White Pine Blister Rust



Blister rust is hiding deep in northern Idaho forests.

A deadly fungus (blister rust) has been killing Idaho's state tree.

In 1910, blister rust sneaked into North America.

It was in a shipment of white pine seedlings grown in France.

It was first seen in Idaho in 1923.

Blister rust's partners in this deadly scheme are gooseberry and currant shrubs.

(Their scientific name is *Ribes* - rhymes with "my bees.")

The blister rust spends part of its life on *Ribes* plants.

The rust makes spores that blow from *Ribes* and land on needles of the western white pine tree. (Spores work like seeds.)

The rust grows from the spore on the needles.

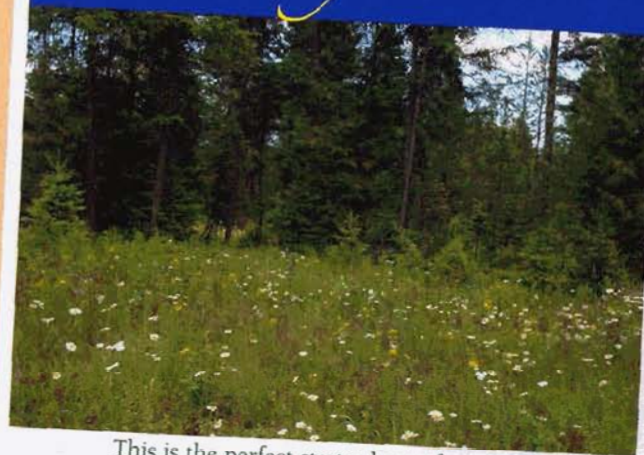
Then it spreads to the branches and trunk of the tree.

Large sores ("cankers") form, and the tree eventually dies.



NEW LISTING

A Sunny Home



This is the perfect starter home for a young white pine family. The scenic northern Idaho location features at least 30 inches of precipitation yearly in a beautiful mix of rain and snow.

Ranging between 2,000 and 6,000 feet in elevation, the open, sunny, floor plan will give the youngsters plenty of room to put down roots.

Recently opened up and gooseberry free, this beauty won't last. Call today for a showing.

1 800 BIG TREES

Dear Editor,

We've been reading about the troubles of our state tree, the western white pine. This important tree has almost disappeared for the following reasons: 1) the way forests were logged in the past; 2) people putting out forest fires; 3) insects that attack and kill trees; and especially, 4) blister rust. But it's not too late. There are some things we can do to help!

Did you know that since the 1950's scientists have been growing white pines that can resist blister rust? A scientist named Richard T. Bingham noticed something interesting. Some white pine trees were amazing!

He realized that these trees were different. They were like "super pines" that the blister rust couldn't kill!

Even surrounded by dead and dying trees, some white pines were perfectly healthy. He realized that these trees were different. They were like "super pines" that the blister rust couldn't kill!

Mr. Bingham collected cones and seeds from these "super pines." From the seeds, he grew more trees that



could resist the blister rust. He created a special orchard at the University of Idaho in Moscow, Idaho. There, people raised healthy white pines to produce more seeds. This orchard has produced thousands of pounds of white pine seeds. Many scientists at universities, in government, and in private companies

continue this work today.

So, we have the seeds. We can grow thousands of new trees from these seeds each year. We know that western white pines need open, sunny places to grow. These kinds of openings are created by logging, fire, insect damage, and other disturbances. We also need to keep looking for healthy adult trees that can resist the blister rust, and collect their seeds.

There is hope for the King Pine. Let's do everything we can to save it, and let it reign again in Idaho's forests!

Signed,
L.L.K.S.
(Long Live the King Society)