

Shore juniper - *Juniperus conferta*

Shrub Profile

By: James Robbins



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

Cooperative Extension Service



Probably the best spreading juniper for the south is shore juniper (*Juniperus conferta*).

Shore juniper is usually easy to identify because of the attractive and distinctive blue-green cast to its long awl-shaped juniper needles. If you look closely, you will see what looks like a single white band running the length of the needle on one side. Needles appear further apart than on other junipers, which helps give the plant an airy appearance. A number of newer selections (e.g. 'Blue Lagoon,' 'Blue Mist,' 'Blue Pacific') offer a brighter blue-green color even through the winter. The late J.C. Raulston favored a cultivar called 'Silver Mist' because its needles have an added hint of silver and the plant is supposedly more compact and dense.

While not as low or mat forming as creeping juniper (*Juniperus horizontalis*), shore juniper is still low and spreading with a height of 15-24" and a width of 6 to 8'. The cultivar 'Blue Pacific' is clearly lower than the species with a height of 12".

If you look at the plant closely, you might observe what looks like a 1/3" light gray-green fleshy berry, but it is actually a small cone with a waxy coating.

Shore juniper is adaptable from Arkansas all the way to Florida. Like most junipers, it will perform best and be most dense if grown in full sun. While a well-drained site is recommended, this juniper is a bit more tolerant of wet areas than many of the creeping junipers.

While this juniper makes an excellent choice for the front of a mixed shrub border or large open bed, it is best used to cascade over walls or planters. In that application, it looks very much like cascading water. This would be a great choice for steep slopes in full sun situations where mowing is nearly impossible.

The only juniper you might confuse shore juniper with is the japgarden juniper (*Juniperus procumbens*). In some ways shore juniper and japgarden look similar. Both have distinctive blue-green, awl-shaped needles. Needles on japgarden juniper are denser and the plant does not grow nearly as fast as shore juniper. Japgarden juniper is the perfect fit if you are designing a Japanese garden or a water feature where you need a plant to flow elegantly over rocks. Like shore juniper, this plant will perform best in full sun and with soils that are well drained.



Common Name: Shore juniper

Varieties to look for: 'Blue Pacific,' 'Blue Mist'

Flower Color: none

Blooming period:

Type: needle evergreen

Size: 18" tall by 8' wide

Exposure: sun

Soil: adaptable

Watering: moist best

When to prune: anytime

Suggested use: ground cover

University of Arkansas, United States Department of Agriculture and County Governments Cooperating.

The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.