

Highline SeaTac Botanical Garden Tree Walk



1

Weeping White Pine **(*Pinus strobus 'pendula'*)**

As you enter the Botanical Garden from the parking lot, look to your right as you walk down the path in front of you. There after a few paces, you will see a curious pine that looks seemingly hovering and hunched over, holding its branches out. The Weeping White Pine is about 11 feet tall with blue green pine needles that are 2 to 4 inches long. The needles, like all white pines, are held in groups of 5. Underneath the flowing needles that branch downwards, the tree has silvery-gray bark. Weeping White Pines are an ornamental variety of the Eastern White Pine.



2

Pacific Rhododendron ***(Rhododendron macrophyllum)***

Continuing forward on this path, to the right about 10 feet ahead of you, is a bushy plant, about 15-20 feet tall, that forms a wall of green behind some other shrubs. This is the Pacific Rhododendron. This shrub is a native plant that forms the state flower of Washington. It has leathery evergreen leaves, which are oval shaped and appear near the tips of its branches in whorls. The flower buds are large and showy, and the flowers that emerge are large and pink in the spring. Later in the fall, woody capsules form on the rhododendron.



3

Korean Spruce (*Abies koreana*)

As you walk down the path, turn to the left as another path branches off it. You will cross a small bridge and to the right, near a black bench, will be a conifer that is about 25 feet tall, and shaped curiously. This is a Korean Fir, originally from East Asia and popular for bonsai due to its clean outline and smooth trunk. The bark is a smooth red brown with small resin blisters. The branches grow upwards and outwards, and like all firs, needles attach along the branch and branchlets. The needles are a shiny green on top and a blue-green below. When this fir forms cones, they will sit upwards on the branches and are a purple color.



4

Japanese Fatsia (*Fatsia japonica*)

To the left of the fir, is a shorter tree with large palmate leaves. Like large hands, the leaves of the Japanese Fatsia stretch out and form a dense, green foliage. The leaves are evergreen and the blue berries that form on the Fatsia ripen in the winter. Fatsia forms white, rounded flowers that are clustered in branched structures that spread upwards. The branching structure that supports the blossom stands out from the leaves, being rather large and a pale green. Japanese Fatsia prefers to grow in shaded spaces, protected from the sun. If it receives too much sun, the leaves will brown.



5

American Boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*)

As you continue on the path as it curves to the left, look to the right and you will notice a small evergreen tree next to the pagoda. This American Boxwood has glossy green foliage made up of thick, oval shaped, dark green leaves. At about 10 feet tall with pale brown bark, this plant captures your attention as you look closer. In the late summer, American Boxwood forms red fruits in small clusters that stay until mid winter. The flowers are small and green.



6

Bamboo **(subfamily *Bambusoideae*)**

Look to the left of the Boxwood and you will see some Bamboo growing in a cluster. It's hard to miss with some stalks reaching at least 50 feet in height, this Bamboo is one of over 4,000 species of Bamboo. This plant is actually a treelike grass, forming thick woody, evergreen stems with slender leaves. Like other members of the grass family, Bamboo spreads easily through its roots. This is why it forms stands like the one found here in the Botanical Garden.



7

American Pussy Willow **(*Salix discolor*)**

Continue on the curved path, and go straight, crossing the path we began the tree walk on.

As you walk towards the rose garden, turn right onto the path that goes away from it. To your left, you will notice a 10 foot, twisted, gnarled looking tree. Turn left on the path behind the American Pussy Willow. This tree doesn't have the slender form most willows take- notice how some of the branches are very thick and grooved. If you come to see the pussy willow in the late winter, you'll see fuzzy flower buds standing out amongst the brown branches. This tree has slender green leaves that are lost in the fall and it flowers in the spring.





8

River Birch **(*Betula nigra*)**

Continue straight. Looking ahead you will see three trees next to each other, about 40 feet tall, bending over the trail ahead. Notice how the brown bark peels off of them like papery wisps to reveal a light tan bark underneath. Like all birches, these trees have small, toothed oval shaped leaves and cone-like fruit containing winged seeds. You can see what is left of the fruit year round, sticking out from the branches. In the spring catkins (long drooping flower clusters) form and in the fall the leaves turn yellow before falling.

9

Yellow Cedar **(*Cupressus nootkatensis*)**

Continuing down the trail you were on, turn left once it splits by the p-patch area. You will see a lone 30 foot tall cedar. It has split trunks with dark brown bark, which can be easily seen from the side. This Yellow Cedar has foliage that appears like overlapping scales. As an evergreen, it never loses its leaves. The cones found on the Yellow Cedar are small, rounded, and found in clusters at the end of the branches, unlike Western Redcedar where the cones are along the branch.





10

Japanese Black Pine **(*Pinus thunbergii*)**

Continue on the trail as it curves to the left, heading towards the street and to the Seike Garden. As you approach the garden, in a circle of rocks is a beautifully leaning Japanese Black Pine. The 8-foot tree has branches that form flat layers. The bark is rough and dark, and the needles are a dark green. In groups of 2 and 3 to 5 inches long, they grow toward the end of the short branches. Originally from Japan and Korea, this pine is popular for gardens such as these.

11

Ponderosa Pine **(*Pinus ponderosa*)**

Across from the Japanese Black Pine, on the other side of the black fence, is a majestic 80 foot conifer with distinctive reddish bark on the upper trunk. This is a Ponderosa pine, distinguishable by its irregular crown, dark bark that flakes off farther up on the trunk to reveal the red underneath. Though you cannot see them, the olive green needles of this pine are in groups of 3 and the cones have prickly tips on each scale. This conifer is naturally found in mountainous regions, and is fire resistant once mature.



12

Common Juniper ***(Juniperus communis)***

Walk toward the sign for Seike Garden and turn left on the trail that leads toward a small set of steps. As you go up, you will see a 20-foot tall conifer with a fuzzy, soft appearance. The needles of this conifer are flexible and no longer than 1/2 inch. They're attached onto pale reddish branches. The Common Juniper is an popular ornamental tree due to its conical shape and elegant appearance. The Common Juniper is the most widespread juniper in the world, with a large natural distribution and its use in gardens, it can be found on every continent.

