Mugo Pine

*Pinus mugo*

Alex X. Niemiera, Professor, School of Plant and Environmental Sciences, Virginia Tech

**Summary:**
Foliage: 1 to 2 inch long needles; 2 needles per fascicle (bundle); evergreen
Height: Depends on cultivar
Spread: Depends on cultivar
Shape: most dwarf types have a low mound form or an upright oval form; the species is a medium to large multi-stem tree form
Main Features: Generally only dwarf forms of mugo pine are sold at garden centers; the species (non-dwarf) is a multi-stem medium to large tree. Dwarf forms vary in their growth rate from 1 to 8 inches per year, and in their form (mounded to upright oval). Hence, cultivar selection is important to match the cultivar to the available garden/landscape space. Cultivars are useful in mass, as foundation plants, and to frame a landscape element (e.g., entryway, walkway, art work); individual cultivars will be discussed in the Additional Information section. Mugo pine tolerates dry and alkaline soil.

**Plant Needs:**
Zone 3 to 7 (will languish in hotter portions of zone 7)
Light: Full sun
Moisture: Average to dry
pH range: Acid to alkaline

**Functions:**
Dwarf forms of mugo pine are useful in mass, as foundation plants, and to frame a landscape element (e.g., entryway, walkway, art work).

**Care:**
No special care is needed. If pruning is required, then candle growth (newly emerging shoots in spring) should be cut in half.

**Additional Information:**
There are numerous cultivars in the trade (more than 40). Some of the popular ones are: ‘Mops’ slow-growing globe-shaped form
var. pumilo (Pumilo Group) wide-growing form
‘Sherwood Compact’ slow-growing flat mound form
‘Slowmound’ slow-growing mounded form
‘Tannenbaum’ tall-growing form (10 feet +) with a dense conical form