

Hoop-pine

Araucaria cunninghamii D. Don

Araucaria family (Araucariaceae)

Post-Cook introduction

Hoop-pine or Moreton-Bay-pine is a large introduced ornamental evergreen tree with straight axis, with a conical crown that becomes irregular and rounded with age. The branches spread widely in rings about 2 ft (0.6 m) or more apart, the lower horizontal and upper pointing upward, and the needlelike leaves are of two kinds. To 80 ft (24 m) and 1½ ft (0.5 m) in trunk diameter, somewhat larger in age and in native home 100–200 ft (30–61 m) high and 2–6 ft (0.6–1.8 m) in diameter. Bark dark gray brown, smoothish, with horizontal lines suggesting hoops or bands, slightly scaly, peeling off in thin layers like birch, on small trunks gray and very smooth. Inner bark red, very hard, thick. Branches regular, several at a ring. Twigs long and very slender, often crowded and clustered or tufted, green, hairless, branching and spreading horizontally, shedding with attached leaves.

Leaves alternate and crowded, hairless, mostly spreading almost at right angle in two rows, needlelike, about ½ inch (13 mm) or more in length or near forks becoming shorter and less than half as long, flattened and nearly ⅙ inch (1.5 mm) wide, stiff, ending in very narrow point, extending down twig at base, shiny green above, shiny light green beneath. Leaves on uppermost branches and cone-bearing twigs spreading on all sides of twig, curving inward, shorter and ¼–¾ inch (6–10 mm) long, short-pointed.

Male and female cones usually on different trees (dioecious). Male cones cylindrical, 1½–3 inches (4–7.5 cm) long and ½ inch (13 mm) in diameter, at ends of twigs. Female cones egg-shaped or rounded, 3–4 inches (7.5–10 cm) long and 2–3 inches (5–7.5 cm) in diameter, composed of many overlapping winglike cone-scales, ending in narrow stiff point curved backward, failing apart at maturity. Seed single, about ¾ inch (1 cm long), attached to a cone-scale 1–1¼ inches (2.5–3 cm) long and shedding together like a two-winged seed.

The wood is pale yellow or whitish, lightweight (sp. gr. 0.42) fairly soft, straight-grained, easily worked, and readily stained. It is not resistant to decay or termites. In Australia, it is used for interior construction, including flooring and molding, furniture, veneers and plywood, and boxes and crates. It is not used in Hawaii because of

the limited supply. A transparent whitish to yellowish resin is produced from wounds.

Introduced to Hawaii about 1880 as an ornamental and later used in forestry tests. A large individual on the grounds of Iolani Palace in Honolulu serves as the community Christmas tree. The Division of Forestry has planted 8600 trees on the forest reserves on all islands but mostly on Kauai. This species is one of the most important native softwoods of Australia.

Special areas

Foster, Pepeekeo

Champion

Height 101 ft (30.8 m), c.b.h. 7.6 ft (2.3 m), spread 28 ft (8.5 m). Foster Gardens, Honolulu, Oahu (1968).

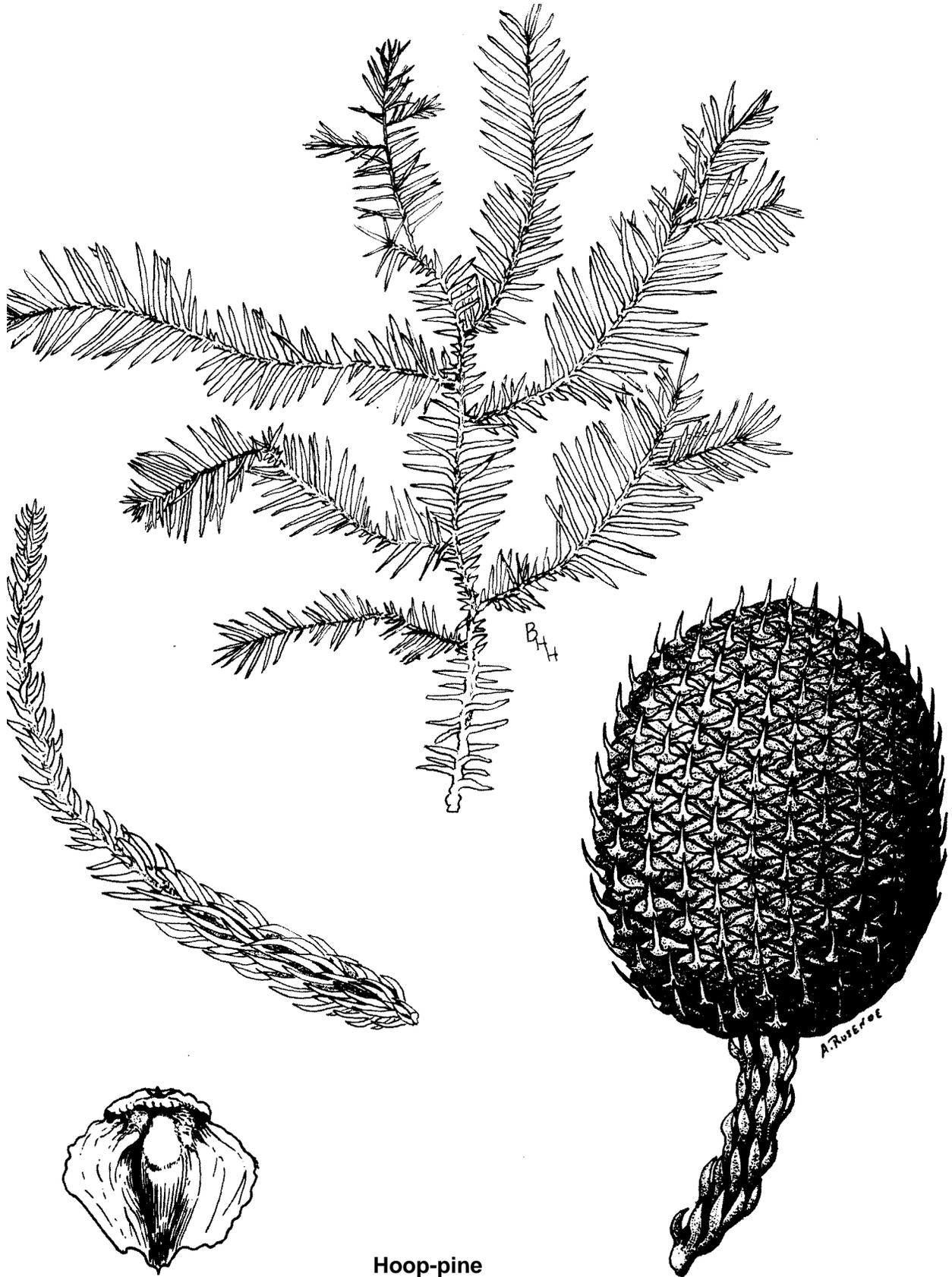
Range

Native of eastern Australia. Scattered in wet forest of coastal ranges, subtropical with warm humid summers and mild winters. Planted as a forest tree in Australia and South Africa and as an ornamental through the tropics.

Other common names

Moreton-Bay-pine, Cunningham araucaria, Hawaiian-star-pine

This species honors Allan Cunningham (1791–1839), British-born botanist who explored Australia.



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Twig with scalelike leaves (left), twig with needlelike leaves (center), and seeds with cone-scale (lower right), 1 X.