



State Tree of Ladakh

Juniper Tree (*Juniperus semiglobosa*)



Shukpa

शुक्पा
شکپا

Juniper

Welcome to the floral diversity of Ladakh, a culturally embraced plant that holds immense significance in Ladakh, known as Himalayan pencil cedar (*Juniperus semiglobosa*). It is locally called as "Shukpa". This mountain cedar is an enduring evergreen species of cold desert, characterized by its semi globose canopy and aromatic foliage, thrives in the extreme climatic conditions of the Himalayan highlands.

It plays a crucial role in the ecological dynamics of this region, contributing to soil stabilization and providing habitat sustenance for a diverse array of flora and fauna.



Global Distribution

Juniperus semiglobosa is a common juniper in the high mountains of Central Asia to West & Central Himalaya. The altitudinal range is between 5000-14500 ft. asl.

In India, Juniper occurs along the Karakoram, Zaskar and Batalik Ranges in Ladakh and along the North Western Himalaya.



Shukpa has low seed viability resulting into limited regeneration.

The cones of Juniper are 6-7 mm in diameter, 2-3 seeds, with a blue glaucous covering (Cupressaceae Family).

Key Facts

- Height 10-20 m, dbh 1-2 m
- Male strobili: numerous on ultimate branchlets
- Female cones: solitary, terminal or subterminal



Pledge to protect the oracle of the Himalayas. The State Tree of Ladakh

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The plant parts are used in religious and cultural ceremonies and unrestricted use of *shukpa* is pushing this iconic species to the brink, causing irreparable loss to this important natural heritage of Ladakh. It's time to stand up and protect our prickly pal!

The tree is a threatened species in the North Western Himalayas with restricted sporadic population having poor regeneration.

References: worldfloraonline.org

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Wildlife Protection Department, Ladakh
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Bombay Natural History Society, Mumbai
bnhs.org

Shukpa possess great adaptability skills

It grows on various rocky soils, moraines, stony slopes and even crevices of bare rock.

But wait, there's trouble in paradise!

Despite its fame, Juniper faces a tough battle against depletion, with high demand pushing it to the high risk. Time to rally behind this beloved tree!



A young shukpa dreams beneath azure skies

Interesting facts about Juniper

Meet the towering superstar of Ladakh's landscape:

Juniperus semiglobosa! Standing tall at heights of up to 12 meters, it's the evergreen coniferous celeb you can't miss in Ladakh. It's a tree that grows beyond the tree line.

Drumroll, please!

In Ladakh, *Juniperus semiglobosa*, locally known as, "shukpa" takes the crown as the **State Tree of Ladakh**.

Get ready to discover a rare gem!

Shukpa is exceptional in Ladakh's cold desert, popping up in the most rugged places across Middle, Northern Western, and Southern region of Ladakh.

Ready for a whiff of culture and tradition?

Shukpa isn't just a tree, it's a cultural icon! From religious ceremonies to social gatherings, it releases an aroma, ancient and true through misted valleys and mountain air.

Shukpa is also believed to have antifungal properties.