



The North American [tree](#) commonly known as Douglas fir is *Pseudotsuga menziesii*. These Douglas firs may reach heights in excess of 90 metres (295 feet) and have diameters of more than 4 metres (13 feet), but most contemporary stands are composed of trees that are much smaller because many old specimens have been logged. The species is one of the best timber trees in North America, as well as a popular ornamental and [Christmas tree](#), and it is used for reforestation along the Pacific coast. Its [seeds](#) are produced first at the age of about 25 years and in large crops every 5 to 7 years.

The Mexican Douglas fir (*P. lindleyana*) is largely native to the [Sierra Madre](#) mountain ranges of [Mexico](#).

The Chinese Douglas fir (*P. sinensis*) is found in [China](#), [Taiwan](#), and parts of [Vietnam](#) and is an important timber tree. The Japanese Douglas fir (*P. japonica*), [endemic](#) to the islands of [Honshu](#) and [Shikoku](#), is listed as an [endangered species](#) by the [IUCN Red List of Threatened Species](#).



Anyone who has read an even brief history of Brazil has heard of Brazilwood, known as *pau-brasil* in Portuguese, which is how Brazil got its name.

The wood is reddish-orange in color and was highly sought after in Europe after its discovery, particularly for the dye extracted from it for use in high-end fabrics.

While the demand for it was consistently high, the supply soon dwindled and the economy surrounding it broke down.

These days, even though the wood is no longer needed to replicate its beautiful hues, the demand for it remains strong in an area one might not expect: Classical instrument making, specifically in the production of violin bows.

Known as Pernambuco-wood in the classical music world, it was in the 18th century that the wood was discovered to have properties highly appreciated by European bow makers. The durable yet flexible material, which doesn't rot or attract insects, is considered to be of the highest caliber and one that is sought after the world over.

Additionally, and perhaps more importantly for classical musicians, the wood allows for a better timber and higher musical volume.

Unfortunately, the species is near extinction today, not only due to the long-abandoned transatlantic trade, but because of deforesting efforts from what came after, mainly sugarcane and coffee production.

Today, it's a protected species but that doesn't stop illegal removal in areas that aren't always actively policed. There are even licenced suppliers in terms of bow-selling, and luckily foreign buyers are educated on the subject and therefore request proof against illegal harvesting.

If you'd like to see the tree close-up, a trip to Pernambuco is your best bet, for they have the only museum dedicated to the tree (Museu do Pau-Brasil) and the largest grouping, numbering 50 thousand, of young Brazilwood trees.

If you understand Portuguese, I also recommend the documentary *A Árvore da Música* (The Music Tree). Below are the trailer the documentary in three parts.

Paubrasilia echinata is a species of flowering plant in the legume family, Fabaceae, and is endemic to the Atlantic Forest. It is a Brazilian timber tree commonly known as Pernambuco wood or brazilwood and is the national tree of Brazil



Allocasuarina luehmannii Buloke



The evergreen tree typically grows to a height of 10 to 20 metres (33 to 66 ft) and usually produces a clear trunk. It is moderately to long-lived, usually over 15 years with a moderate growth rate. It is [dioecious](#) with male and female flowers on separate plants, which flowers in spring.^[1] It is known as having the hardest wood in the world, with a [Janka hardness](#) of 5060 lbf.^[2]

The [cladodes](#) are 8 to 22 millimetres (0.31 to 0.87 in) long with 10 to 14 teeth. They are sometimes waxy, of slightly greater diameter near their apex than their base.^[3]

The species occurs across a vast region of eastern and southern Australia, mainly north and west of the Great Dividing Range, within the [Murray-Darling Basin](#), and within the states of [New South Wales](#), [South Australia](#) and [Victoria](#).^[4] Its extent of occurrence has been greatly depleted by clearing for cereal cropping and pasture development. It is an important food resource for the endangered southeastern subspecies of the [red-tailed black cockatoo](#) in the Wimmera region of western Victoria, where some remnant stands are threatened by farming practices.^[5] It grows on a range of soil types, mainly sandy loams, and is usually found on lower parts of the landscape. It tolerates acid, alkaline and moderately saline soils.^[1]

The [Shire of Buloke](#) in [Victoria, Australia](#) is named after this tree species.^[6]