

# Western hemlock *Tsuga heterophylla*

The western hemlock has surprisingly small cones for such a big tree



Natural distribution of western hemlock



illustration by John White

The western hemlock has a graceful shape with elegant down-swept branches.

*These are some of Bedgebury's most loved trees.*

In North America the timber from this tree is used for joinery, construction and pulp. However, in the UK this use is less common, possibly because the tree's wiry branches are difficult to remove. In Britain western hemlocks are planted as landscape trees and, when given room like here at Bedgebury, they can develop beautiful shapes.

The oldest western hemlocks can be found in the 'old growth' forests on the west coast of North America. Unfortunately some of these forests and their wildlife are being destroyed by aggressive logging.

You can help by looking for the FSC logo showing that any timber you buy comes from sustainably-managed forests.



*Did you know?*

Western hemlocks were named after the poisonous hemlock plant because the smell of their needles was thought to be similar. The plants are not related.