Cupressaceae
The Cypress Family

30 genera
140 species

Distribution:
Worldwide, from sea level to mountain peaks. Some taxa are adapted to extreme environments. Many genera and species of this family show restricted, relictual distributions and many are endangered.

Economic Uses:
- Many species are important timber trees, and are also planted as ornamentals.
- Some shrub species are of horticultural value, especially junipers.
- A few cypress trees are cultivated to a small extent as Christmas trees.
- The fleshy cones of Juniperus communis are used to flavor gin.
- Calocedrus decurrens is the main wood used to make wooden pencils and clipboards.
- Redwoods (Sequoioideae) are the largest and tallest trees in the world.

Gymnosperm Phylogeny with required families emphasized:

Characteristic features:
- Monoecious, subdioecious or (rarely) dioecious shrubs and trees.
- Leaves scale-like to linear.
- Female cones: ovules 1-20 per cone scale; cone scales fused to bracts.
- Male cones: microsporangia 2-10 per microsporophyll; pollen without appendages.

Required genus: Juniperus
- Female seed cones: distinctive, fleshy fruit-like coalescing scales which fuse together to form a “berry”.
- Many junipers have two types of leaves: seedlings with needle-like leaves and manture plants with tiny, overlapping scale-like leaves.

References for further inquiry:

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