

Juniperus macrospoda

No Image

Family: Cupressaceae

Local/common names:
Indian Juniper, Himalayan
Juniper, Devidiar (Lahul and
Spiti), Chalai, Leur Shurr

Trade name: Dhup

Profile:

Juniperus macropoda belongs to the Cupressaceae family and has a characteristic aroma in its fruits and leaves. The plant is valued for its medicinal properties.

Habitat and ecology: *Juniperous macropoda* occurs widely from Pakistan to Uttar Pradesh at an altitude of 2400-4300 m. The plant is distributed almost throughout the temperate and alpine regions of the Western Himalayas. It is generally found in dry river valleys in the temperate and cold regions of the northern hemisphere. The trees form open forests in Lahaul, are found sporadically in Kinnaur and are patchy in Giu and Attargu in Spiti. In the Pattan valley of Himachal Pradesh, this species is found in association with *Pinus wallichiana*.

Morphology: Junipers vary in size and shape from tall trees (20-40 m tall) to columnar or low spreading shrubs with long trailing branches. The tree is an open foliate and spreading in nature. The leaves are dimorphic with sharp, pointed and open foliate spreading types on the lower branches. The upper branches have scale like leaves. The male cones have imbricate scales that are yellowish in colour while the female cones are purplish with white bloom and have 4-6 scales. At high elevations the tree becomes dwarf and shrubby. The fruits turn bluish-black on ripening and are resinous with two or more seeds.

Distinguishing features: It is easily distinguished by its reddish brown bark, exfoliating in fibrous strips.

Life cycle: Flowering of the plant occurs in the months of March-April. Fruiting occurs in August-September.

Uses: The wood is used for making furniture, fuel and charcoal, building and pencils. The berries are used in Ayurvedic formulations and in cases of colic, cough and pectoral affections, diarrhoea, impotency, indigestion, leucorrhoea, paralysis, piles and skin affections. The young branches are used in medicine for kidney trouble. The fruit and resin are used in ulcers and nasal polyps.

Market rate: Dhup has a market price of Rs.25-30/- per kg.