

Giant Arbor Vitae, Red Cedar

The Giant Arbor Vitae is next to the Douglas fir in importance in British Columbia, where it attains its greatest size on Vancouver Island, along the coast and in the lower parts of the rivers of the Coast Range. It is rarely found in the dry interior of British Columbia, but is abundant in the river valleys on the slopes of the Selkirk and Coast Ranges. Though seldom found more than 150 feet in height, in circumference it rivals the Douglas fir, trees of from 8 to 10 feet in diameter not being rare, and they are occasionally found much larger.



It is chiefly used in the manufacture of shingles, for which purpose it is unequalled by any other wood. Formerly the shingles were made by hand, the wood splitting easily, but improved machinery has so lowered the cost of production that comparatively few hand-made shingles are now used, though they are still in demand when a shingle of superior quality is desired. The wood of the tree takes a very brilliant polish, and is well adapted for interior finishing of all kinds. So great is the variety of shading in the color of the wood that a large house may be finished in it without two rooms being alike. It is not only largely exported, but is now being shipped in increasing quantities to Eastern Canada. In British Columbia it enters largely into the manufacture of doors and cabinet-work of all kinds. Like all the cedars, it lasts well underground, and on this account is much used in the form of telegraph poles and fence posts. The immense canoes made by West Coast Indians are, with very few exceptions, made of this wood.

In addition to its value commercially for shingles and interior finishings, it is the friend of the settler, inasmuch as out of its straight-grained logs, he can build his house, make his furniture and