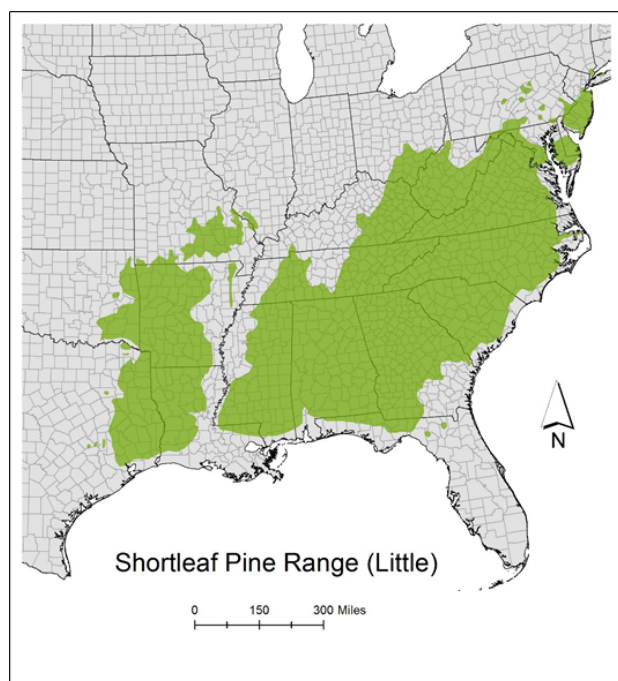


Shortleaf Pine

A FACT SHEET

Shortleaf pine (*Pinus echinata*) is a southern yellow pine native to the southeastern United States. While it occurs in a variety of different habitats, it grows best in savanna or woodland structures (1).

Shortleaf pine ecosystems are resilient to disturbances, provide important habitat for wildlife



such as game species and songbirds, and are adapted to survive in conditions of drought. It is a fire-adapted species that requires frequent small-scale burns to thrive. More frequent fires result in open woodland or savanna structures, allowing increased light into the understory which encourages the growth of the types of native grasses and herbs that benefit many species of wildlife (2).

In the last 30 years, shortleaf pine habitat has been reduced by over 50% across its range (3). While the greatest losses have occurred west of the Mississippi River, shortleaf pine is also disappearing from forests on the Cumberland Plateau of Tennessee and Kentucky at high rates. Over 60% of remaining shortleaf forests are found on private forestland (4). That being said, private forest landowners like yourself will play an important role of restoring shortleaf pine habitat.

Sources Cited

(1) **Lawson**, Edwin R. "National Regeneration of Shortleaf Pine." In: Murphy, Paul A., Ed. Proceedings of Symposium on the Shortleaf Pine Ecosystem; 1986 March 31-April 2; Little Rock, AR. Monticello, AR: Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service: 53-63, 1986. <https://www.srs.fs.fed.us/pubs/45860>.

(1) **Murphy**, Paul A. "Proceedings of Symposium on the Shortleaf Pine Ecosystem; 1986 March 31-April 2; Little Rock, AR." Monticello, AR: Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, 1986. <https://www.srs.fs.fed.us/pubs/45841>.

(2) **Masters**, Ronald E. "The Importance of Shortleaf Pine for Wildlife and Diversity in Mixed Oak-Pine Forests and in Pine-Grassland Woodlands." Shortleaf Pine Restoration and Ecology in the Ozarks: Proceedings of a Symposium, 2006, 2.

(3-4) **Sutter**, Robert. "Ecological and Social History of Shortleaf Pine." Shortleaf Pine Initiative, May 2019. <http://shortleafpine.net/why-shortleaf/history>.

Identification Tips

Shortleaf pine is a southern yellow pine with a straight bole and smaller crown. Mature trees reach 80 to 100 feet in height. Often seen growing with Virginia pine, white oak, and other drier-site species.

Cones: Small, taller than they are wide, oblong with a slight taper towards the top

Needles: 2 to 3 short (3-5 inches), relatively straight needles per bundle

Bark: Rectangular platy bark with resin pockets



Photo by Frank Bonner, courtesy of Bugwood.org.