

# Balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*)

**Needles** - One or more live, unfolded needles (spread away at an angle from the developing stem enough that its point of attachment to the stem is visible). *This plant is an evergreen and has needles all year long.*



## Dormant bud

The leaf buds are tan and domed shape at the tip of the branches. They turn green before they break open. *You do not record this phase.*

## Breaking needle bud

One or more breaking needle buds are visible (green needle tip is visible at the end of the bud). This is before the first needle has unfolded and spread away from the stem.

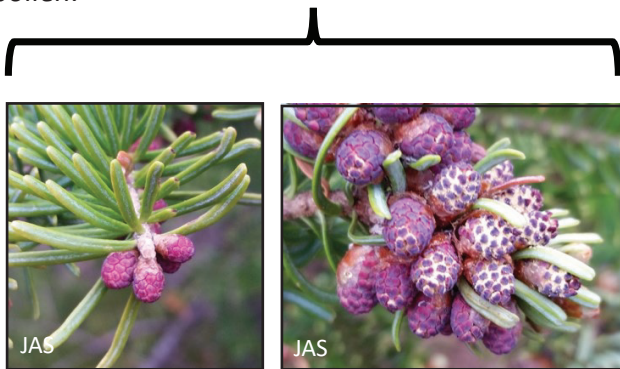
## Young needles

One or more young, unfolded needles spread away from the stem but has not reached full size (1" long) and turned darker.

**Unripe seed cones** - One or more unripe, female seed cones are visible, which are green, blue-gray-green or purple with scales closed together. These are often high in the tree and hard to see without binoculars.



**Pollen cones** - One or more fresh, male pollen cones (strobili) are visible. Cones have overlapping scales that are initially tightly closed, then spread apart to open the cone and release pollen. *Do not include wilted or dried cones that have released pollen.*



### Open male cones

One or more open, fresh, male pollen cones (strobili) are visible, which have spread apart to release pollen. *Do not include wilted or dried cones that have already released pollen.*

### Ripe seed cones ↑

One or more ripe, female seed cones (turned gray-brown or violet-brown and the scales have begun to separate and fall from the cone, releasing seeds). *Do not include empty cones.*