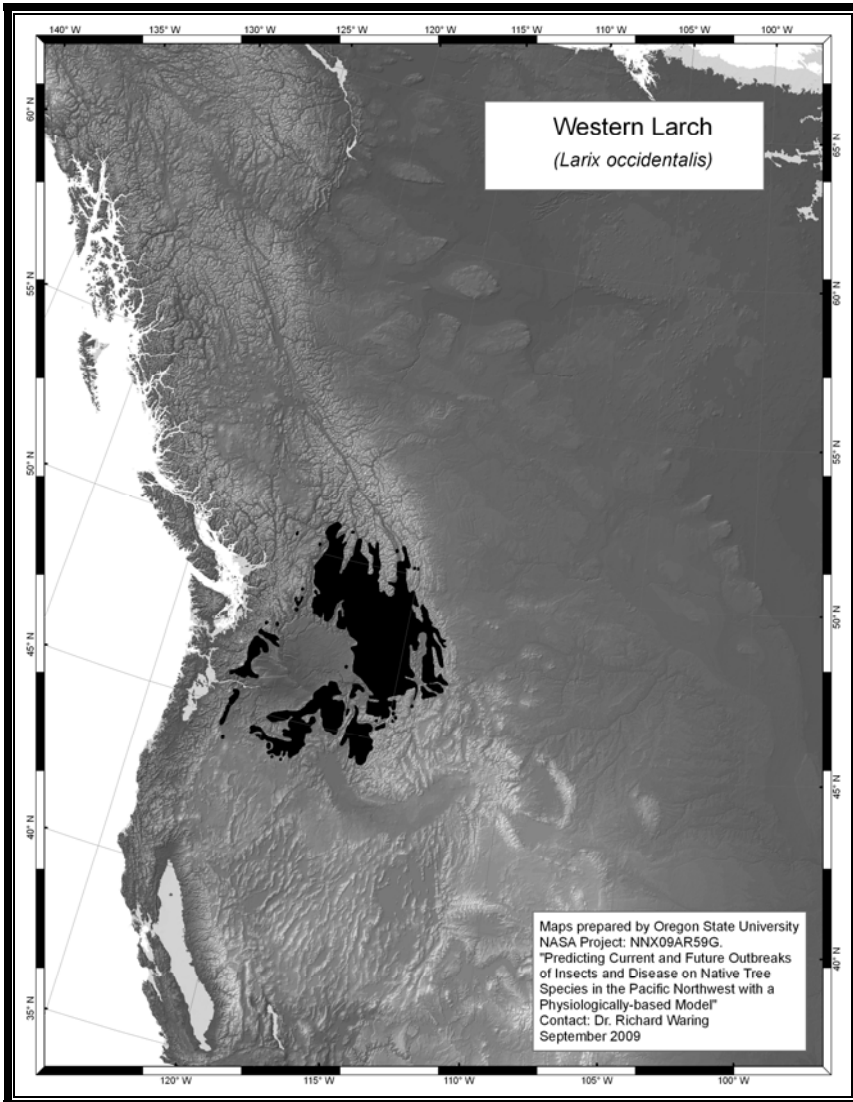


Species Silvics

Scientific Name: Western larch

Common name: *Larix occidentalis*



Climate:

Western larch range straddles the Canada-United States border between British Columbia and the states of Washington, Idaho, and Montana. At elevations as low as 500m in the north of its range and as high as 2400m in the south. These interior regions have coarse soils that tend to be somewhat dry, but with medium to rich soil nutrient contents.

Wood and form:

Trees grow to heights up to 60m with trunks that are straight and usually well self-pruned. Wood is quite strong with moderate weight.

Bark:

Western larch has bark that is reddish brown and scaly when young. The bark becomes thick, fire resistant, and deeply ridged at maturity and looks very similar to Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*).

Cones:

Seed cones are 3-5cm long at maturity with very long narrow bracts. Cones scales are red with a purplish tinge.

Foliage:

Western larch has deciduous foliage. The needles are bright green, 3-5cm long, and slightly curved to a sharp tip.

Ecology:

The seeds of this species are common food for birds. The deciduous needles are a large input to the forest floor litter.

Uses:

Western larch is the most commercially harvested of the larches. Its ability to grow to large sizes with good stem form makes it attractive for lumber. It is also used for pulp and fire wood.