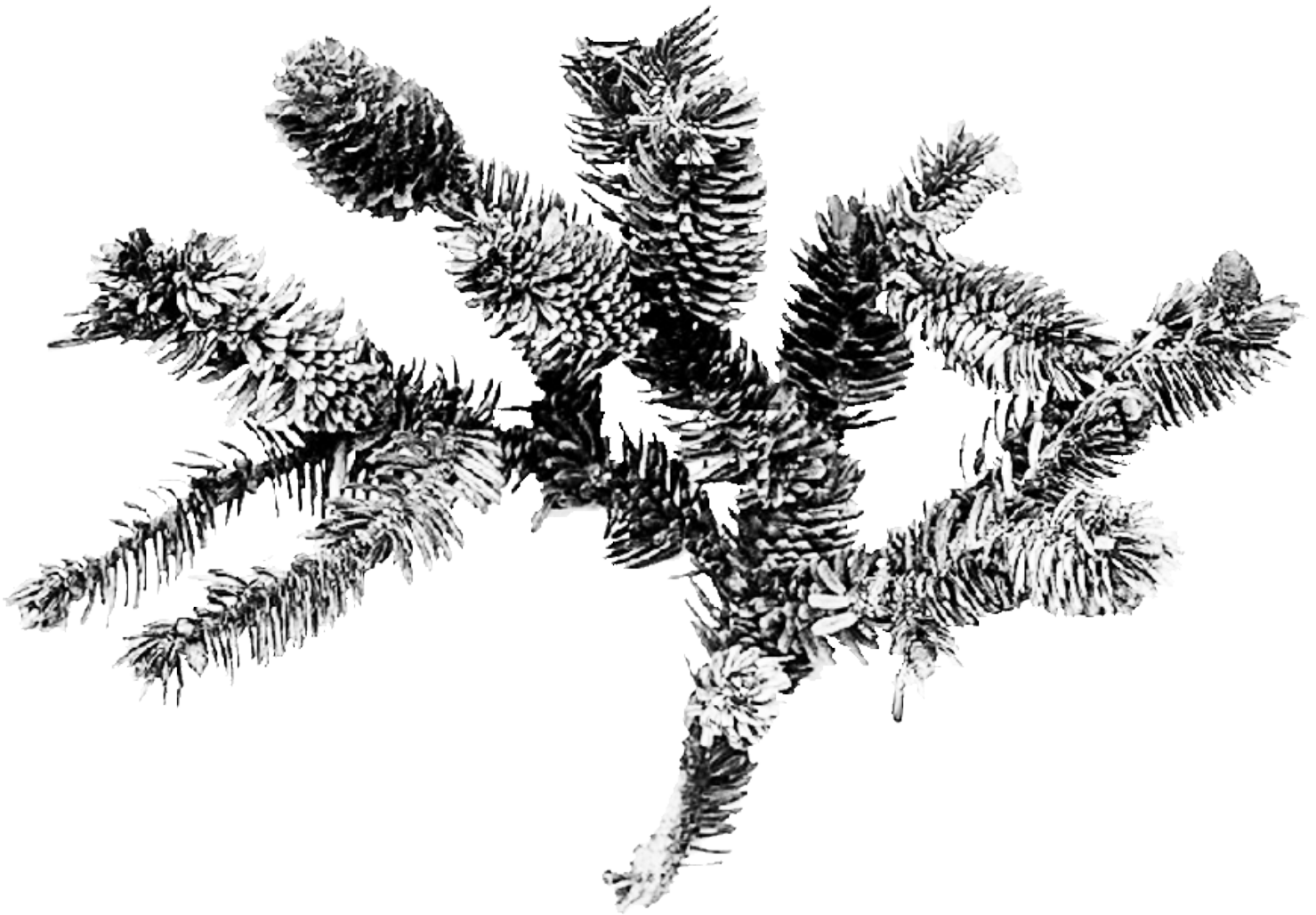


Sitka spruce



State tree of ALASKA

The world's largest-growing spruce is the Sitka spruce, sometimes exceeding 200 feet in height in the temperate rainforests of the Pacific Northwest. A tolerance for salt spray allows the spruce to grow right down to the seashore. It follows the coastline from Alaska through Canada, and southward to northern California, where it grows in the company of redwoods. Light and flexible, the Sitka wood in the Mosquito bomber in World War II and Howard Hughes's Spruce Goose. Look for tall conifer; needles one inch long, four-sided, sharply pointed at the tip, with a tiny peg-shaped base; cones cylindrical, 1.5 to 3.5 inches long, with thin, irregularly toothed scales.