

Species of the Day: Bristlecone Hemlock



Geographical range

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Bristlecone Hemlock, Nothotsuga longibracteata, is listed as 'Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. This tree grows up to 30 metres in height and is found in China in areas with mountains at elevations of between 300 and 2,300 metres above sealevel.

This species is very rare despite its relatively wide distribution. Large scale logging has depleted the number of trees to an undetermined extent, and substantial parts of forest containing this species have disappered especially at lower elevations. In 1982, Bristlecone Hemlock was found in the far north-west of Yunnan by a Chinese team; this identification was verified in October 2000. This disjunctive occurrence at high altitude could indicate that its actual distribution remains unknown.

In China, Bristlecone Hemlock is considered to be a desirable forest tree suitable for afforestation. However, for this species to be conserved, its use as a timber tree must be limited, particularly as it is not in general cultivation outside China, and is rare in botanical collections.

