

Tree of the Month, December 2017: Himalayan pine (*Pinus wallichiana*)

Himalayan pine is a graceful conifer, noted for its 12-18 cm long, drooping gray-green needles and large, narrow seed cones, which can reach 32 cm in length. The cones are pale green and pitchy when young, ripening to a pale brown before dropping from their branches. They are popular with children, who stack them in big piles or carry them around during their visit to the garden.

Pinus wallichiana is native to the Himalaya, Karakoram and Hindu Kush mountains, from Afghanistan to southwestern China. The species was named for and introduced to western cultivation by Nathaniel Wallich, who sent seeds to England in 1836. Wallich was a Danish surgeon and botanist who worked for the East India Company. He helped establish the Calcutta Botanic Garden, where the Assam and Darjeeling tea varieties were developed. In 2009 the garden was renamed the Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose Indian Botanic Garden, in honour of Indian biologist and physicist Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose. The garden's collection includes the Great Banyan Tree (*Ficus benghalensis*), which has the world's broadest canopy covering 3.5 acres and supported by nearly 3,000 aerial roots, resembling a small forest but formed from a single tree.

At VanDusen, Himalayan pine can be found near the Heritage Rose Garden or planted near the top of the waterfall in the Sino-Himalayan Garden.

