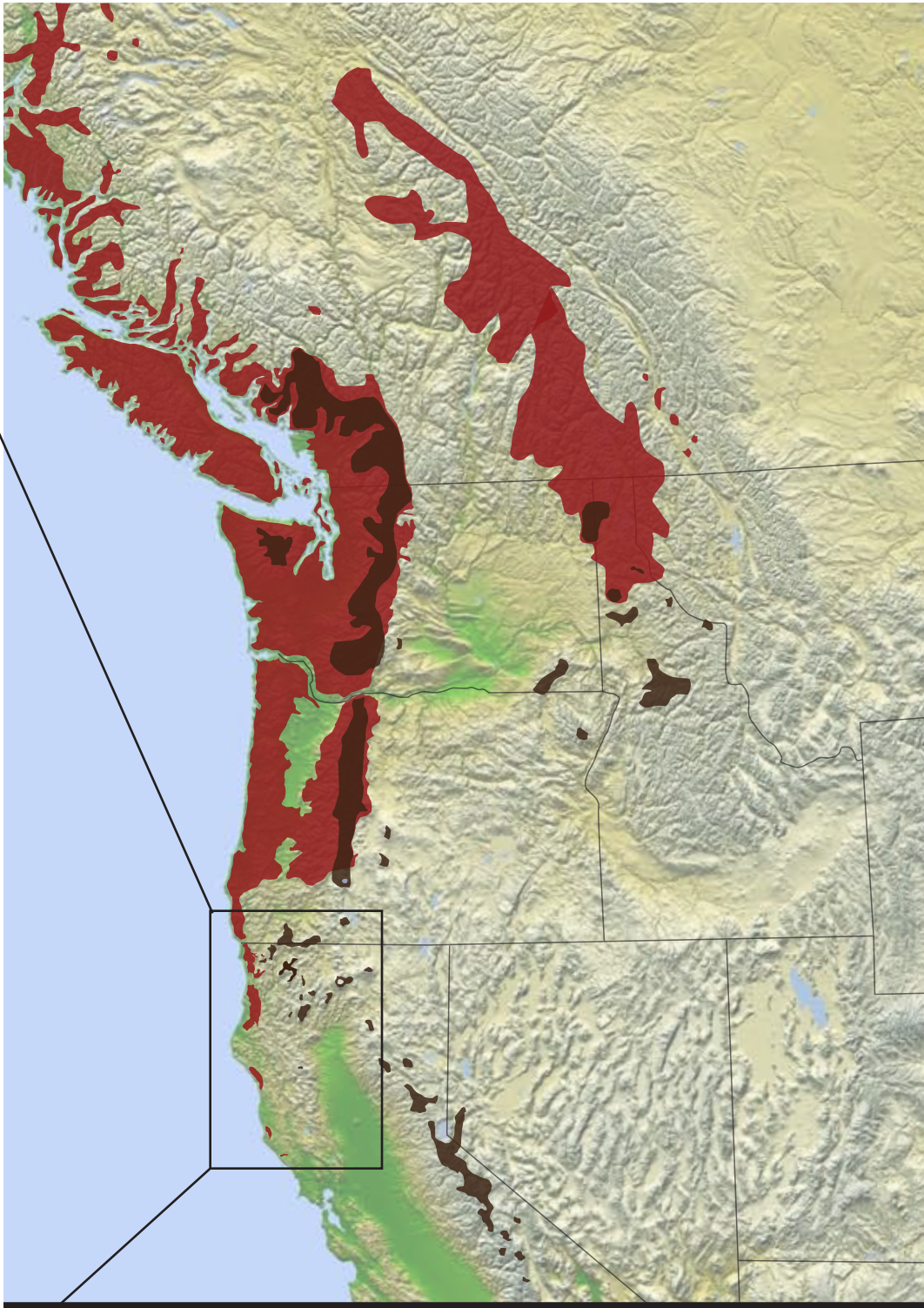




western hemlock and
mountain hemlock in
northwest California
and across the West



Range* map for:  mountain hemlock (*Tsuga mertensiana*)
 western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*)
* based on Little (1971), Griffin and Critchfield (1976), and Van Pelt (2001)
Michael Kauffmann | www.conifercountry.com

Pinaceae
Tsuga mertensiana

mountain hemlock

- Brewer spruce cones (left) and mountain hemlock (right)
- ▼ “droopy top” hemlocks decorate the high country



Bark: varies from purplish brown to reddish brown (similar to Shasta red fir) but with deep, furrowed, more continuous rounded ridges **Needles:** 1/2”-3/4”, dark green to blue green, bluntly rounded, commonly with stomatal bloom on both sides; spirally arranged on twig imparting a star-like appearance **Cones:** 2”-5”, reddish brown turning brown with maturity; larger cones similar to Brewer spruce; can remain on tree year-round **Habitat:** Highest elevations on north face of mountains or cool streamside glades from 4000-9000 feet, upper elevation specimens can grow on south-facing slopes

Pinaceae
Tsuga heterophylla

western hemlock

- ◄ star-like needle growth and small cones are a diagnostic character of this species
- ▼ this “nurse-log” phenomenon is a common sight in old-growth forests of coastal northwest California



Bark: thin and slightly furrowed with long linear strips, varies from grey (outer) to dark red (inner); bases of large trees often buttressed **Needles:** ¼” - ¾” similar to lower redwood needles, but shorter and less uniformly flat, splaying out from the branch at varying angles, dark green above with two white stomatal lines below, glossy green below **Cones:** one inch and egg shaped with thin scales, scale length similar to the largest needles **Habitat:** cool and wet forest along Pacific Coast **Range:** North Coast; within 20 miles of the ocean with few exceptions