

## White poplar

### *Populus alba*

#### Description

Introduced to North America as an ornamental for its attractive leaves of contrasting color but is rarely used today for that purpose.

#### Habit

Tall, deciduous, can grow up to 70 ft tall or more and 2 ft in diameter.

#### Leaves

Simple, oval to maple-leaf in shape with 3-5 broad teeth or lobes, and are dark green in color above and covered with dense white hair below.

#### Stems

Smooth, greenish-white in color that becomes dark and rough with age. Young green or brown twigs are coated with dense woolly hair, especially near the tip. Cross section of stems



reveal a 5 pointed, star shaped pith.

### **Flowers**

Male and female flowers are borne in catkins on separate trees and appear sometime in March and April.

### **Fruits and Seeds**

Small, adorned with cottony fluff for wind dispersal. Mature trees produce thousands of wind dispersed seeds that may be carried over long distances.

### **Habitat**

Native to southern Europe to western Siberia and central Asia. Found in fields, forest edges, and wetland fringes.

### **Reproduction**

Primarily by vegetative means, through root suckers. Large number of suckers from single trees can quickly develop into a dense colony.

### **Similar**

Bigtooth aspen (*Populus grandidentata*) and Quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*).

### **Monitoring and Rapid Response**

Hand pull seedlings and young plants. Entire root system or as much of it as possible should be removed to prevent re-sprout from fragments. Hand removal of plants is best achieved after rain when the soil is loose. Cut large trees with power or manual saws. Girdling will kill the parent tree but may require follow-up cutting or treatment of sprouts. Prescribed burning can also be effective, but repeat

burns are needed. Effectively controlled using any of several readily available general use herbicides such as glyphosate or triclopyr.

### **Credits**

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