

White mulberry

Morus alba

Description

First introduced to the United States during colonial times for the purpose of establishing a silkworm industry.

Habit

Deciduous tree or shrub reaching 30-50 feet tall.

Leaves

Alternate, glossy green in color and vary greatly in shape from simple to lobed on the same tree. Often younger trees found in full sun have greater lobed leaves. Shaded trees tend to have more simple leaves. Leaves have 3 strong veins originating from the base. Leaves turn yellow in the fall.

Stems

Bark of young trees are brownish-orange with





lenticels. As the plant ages, bark turns gray and develops irregular cracks or ridges.

Flowers

Perfect, small, greenish to yellow in color and occur in spikes.

Fruits and Seeds

Fruits form from female flowers. Multiple seeded berries that range in color from black to pink to white when ripe. They contain abundant seed and can produce up to 20 million seeds.

Habitat

Native to China. Found in open forests, woodland edges, prairies, fields and disturbed areas.

Reproduction

By seed.

Similar

Red mulberry (*Morus rubra*) which has large leaves that are dull and rough; basswood (*tilia* spp.) with unlobed leaves and flowers and fruits on leaf-like bracts; sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) with smooth-margined lobed to unlobed leaves; and paper mulberry (*Broussonetia papyrifera*) with leaves densely gray-pubescent.

Monitoring and Rapid Response

Hand pull seedlings. Tree can be cut and grind the stump or paint the cut surface with a systemic herbicide like glyphosate or girdle the tree.

Credits

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