PLANT FACT SHEET

Populus balsamifera L.

GENUS *Populus* **FAMILY** Salicaceae

COMMON NAMES Balsam Poplar, Tacamahac

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Bark, Buds - tea

The wood is used for smoking fish because it imparts flavour.
An essential oil is used by the food industry to flavour alcoholic drinks. Caution: Alcohol is a cause of cancer.
The soft cambium layer between the wood and the bark is sometimes eaten.
The buds are dried and used for tea.

DESCRIPTION

A medium sized deciduous tree. It grows 25-30 m high. The trunk is 50 cm across. The bark is grey and ridged. The leaves are oval and 12 cm long by 10 cm wide. They taper to a point. They have fine teeth. They are glossy green above and white with net veins underneath. The sexes are separate. Male catkins are reddish. Female catkins are followed by small green fruit carried in masses of white cotton-like threads.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It is native to North America. It grows in moist woods. They require moist well-drained soil. It grows to 1675 m in the Rocky Mountains. It suits hardiness zones 3-8. Arboretum Tasmania.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from hardwood cuttings.

NOTES

There are about 35 Populus species.

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