

Populus alba, White Poplar

This tree is closely related to aspens and shares similar growth habits to those trees, reproducing by root suckering in open meadow habitats. It has been seen in multiple counties around the Capital region and is probably underreported, but is still worth taking a look at in terms of distribution. It has been reported to escape cultivation in every state in the lower 48.

Population Status: Confirmed– Saratoga, Albany, Schenectady, Montgomery and Washinton Co.

Description: The easiest identification characteristics of this plant are the leaves and the bark. The bark has characteristic diamond marks that are darker than the light surrounding bark. The three-lobed leaves have a grayish layer of fuzz that is present on both sides but is more thick on the underside of the leaf. The tree can grow to 40-80 feet tall and is short-lived.

Control:

Look-alikes: The plant resembles maples in terms of leaf shape but not color. In growth habit it resembles other aspens such as bigtooth and quaking, but not in leaf shape.

Flower Time and Description: The inconspicuous flowers of white poplar grow on catkins before the leaves are present, similar to those of alders. The seeds are distributed by wind. The catkins are present from March-April.

