

Balsam Poplar

Populus balsamifera

Height: up to 25 meters

Diameter: 20-60 centimetres

Distinguishing feature: The buds of this tree are very sticky and fragrant with resin; bark is thick and ridged.

USES

Historical-

Thick pieces of balsam bark were carved into toys and also used for making spoons. In some northern regions, balsam poplar wood is the favourite fuel for smoking fish.

Commercial-

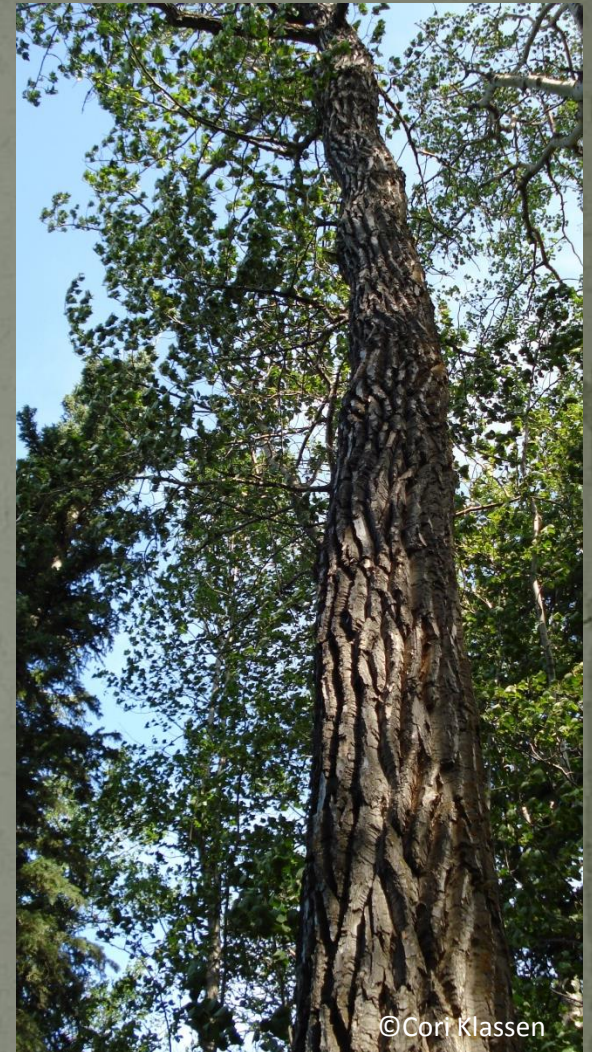
Balsam poplar wood is used to make pulpwood, lumber, veneer, high-grade paper and particle board. It can also be used to make boxes and crates. The short, fine fibres are used in tissues and other paper products.

Natural -

Moose, deer and other ungulates browse on young balsam poplar trees. In the spring, bees collect the sticky resin from the buds and young leaves and use it to cement and waterproof their hives.

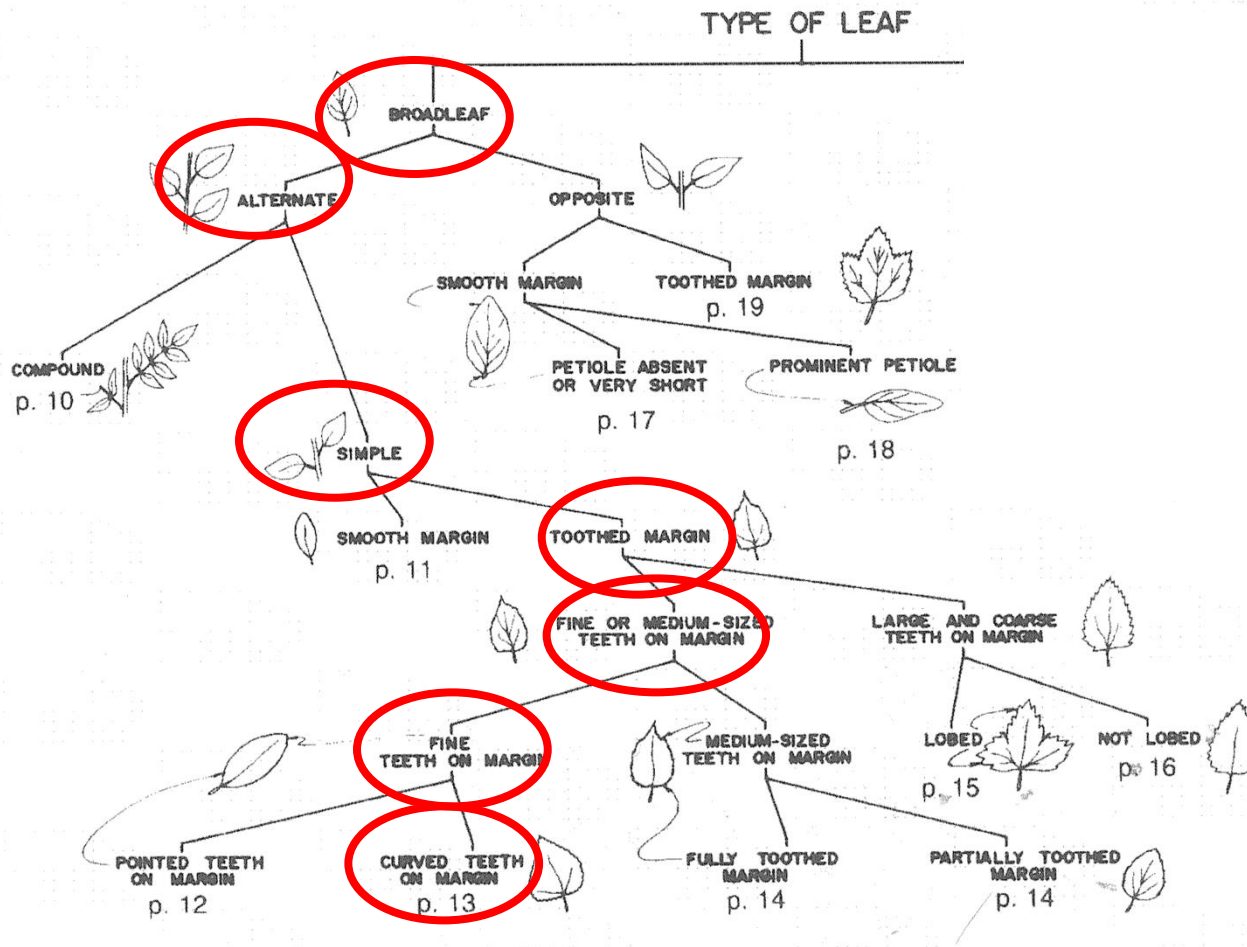
Medicinal-

Young balsam poplar shoots contain bisabolol, which has anti-irritant, anti-inflammatory and anti-microbial properties. The buds contain salicin, a compound related to salicylic acid- the active ingredient in Aspirin.



© Cori Klassen

Identification



Guide to the
Common Native
Trees and Shrubs
of Alberta



Inside
education

Government
of Alberta

LESSER SLAVE
FOREST
EDUCATION
SOCIETY

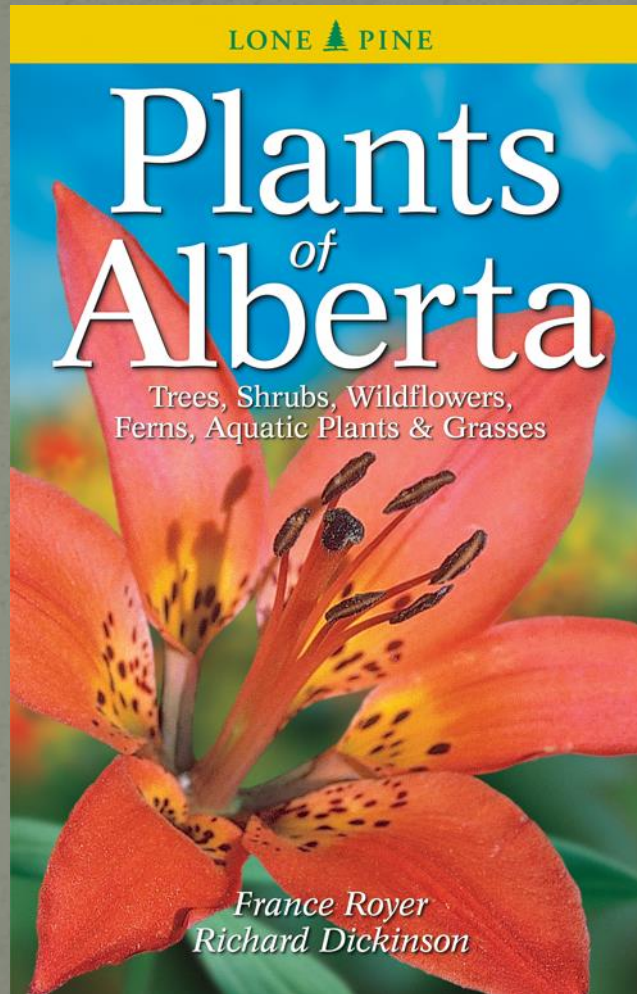
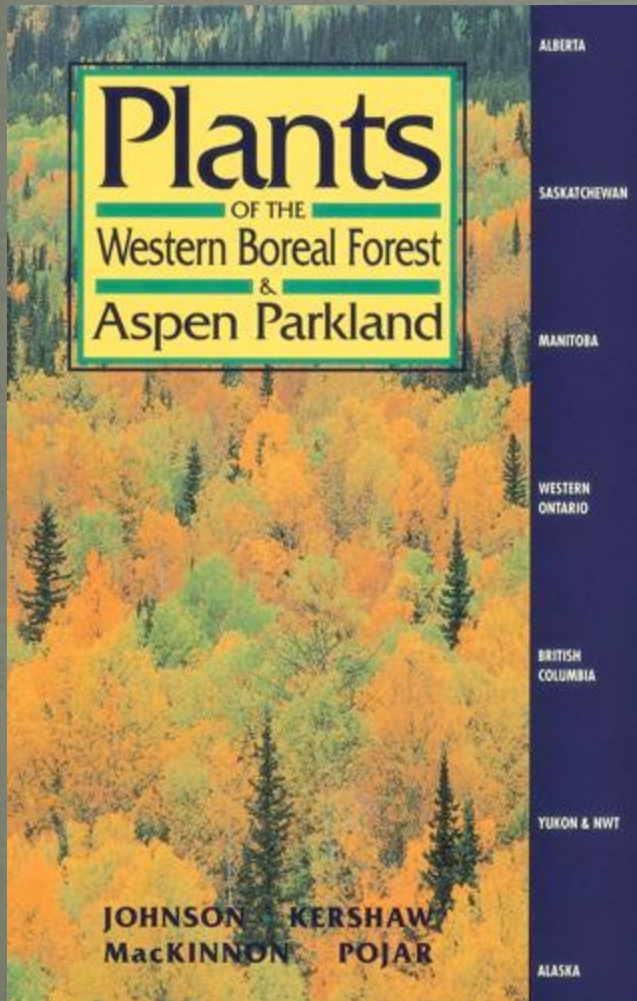
<http://www.insideeducation.ca>

Balsam Poplar

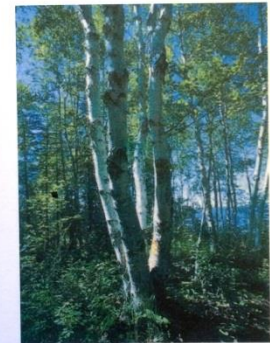
Populus balsamifera



Resources



Guide to the Common Native Trees and Shrubs of Alberta



**Government
of Alberta**

<http://www.insideeducation.ca>

