



White Mulberry *Morus alba*

Common Names: Common mulberry, white mulberry

Native Origin: *Morus alba* was introduced during colonial times in an effort to establish a silkworm industry in the United States. It comes from Asia. It was widely cultivated in Europe during the 18th and 19th centuries for silkworms. It is still cultivated in China, India, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Description: A deciduous shrub or tree, 30 to 50 feet in height and approximately 1.5 feet in diameter. It has low branches and a wide spreading crown. Bark is orange-brown with lenticels when young, becoming gray with long narrow irregular ridges. Glossy green leaves that turn yellow in autumn are 3 to 6 inches long, alternate, stipulate, and variable in shape. Unisex flowers are small, greenish-yellow, with dense spikes. The blackberry-like aggregate fruits, 1 to 1 1/4 inch long, turn from green to white to red to black as they ripen, May to August.



Habitat: White mulberry occurs naturally in sparse forests on hillsides at a wide range of elevations. It grows in part shade to full sun. It can grow in clay, loam, sand, acidic, alkaline, and well-drained soils. It tolerates extended flooding or drought conditions.

Distribution: The seeds are spread by wildlife that feed on the fruits. It expands locally by producing new plants from its roots. It occurs throughout the US with exception of Alaska, Arizona and Nevada.



Ecological Impacts: Impacts include hybridization with and replacement of native mulberry. It transmits a harmful root disease to red mulberry and invades natural areas including fields, forest edges and roadsides.

Control and Management:

- **Manual-** Hand pull seedlings, cut trees, grind stumps, girdle large trees
- **Chemical-** Paint stumps with glyphosate

Diseases: Leaf spot, bacterial blight, powdery mildew, and cankers may infect this tree.

Natural Enemies: Fifty four species of fungi infect white mulberry; approximately 263 arthropods occur on this species

References:

- <http://plants.usda.gov>, www.hort.uconn.edu/plants/m/moralb/moralb1.html,
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