



Black Cottonwood

Populus balsamifera

Willow Family (*Salicaceae*)

General Description: Large deciduous tree, 160-200 ft. tall with a diameter of 3-6 ft. Grows near creeks, rivers, lakes and moist areas.

Key Characteristics: Twigs of this tree droop down from larger branches and curve like spurs at the ends. Alternately arranged leaf buds, 1/4"-1/3" long, conical in shape. Small, roundly triangular leaf scars contain 3 bundle scars—the center one is larger.

Confused With: Quaking aspen, when comparing the two in youthful stages. Black cottonwood has much larger buds, and twigs have spur shoots.

Photo: Joe Bettis