

## Common cottonwood

*Populus deltoides* Marshall

### Life cycle

Fast-growing, weedy tree.

### Leaves

Alternate, simple, broadly triangular, 3 to 5 inches long with coarse, incurved-toothed margins and a smooth base. Leaves are shiny green above and have two to five prominent, fingerlike glands where the long, flattened petiole attaches to the leaf. Margins are outlined by a colorless border.

### Stems

Up to 100 feet at maturity with a straight trunk and minimal branching. Bark is ash gray on mature trees and greenish yellow on young stems. Plants have the ability to form many vigorous, weedy sprouts.

### Flowers and fruit

Male and female flowers are found on separate plants and are clustered in drooping, up to 4-inch-long spikes. Male flowers are reddish;



Common cottonwood seedling.



Common cottonwood leaf.

## Common cottonwood *continued*

female flowers are greenish. Fruit are three- to four-valved capsules that release cottony, wind-disseminated seeds.

### Reproduction Seeds.



Glands on upper leaf surface of common cottonwood.



Mass of common cottonwood seeds.



Common cottonwood tree.

**Salicaceae (Willow family)**