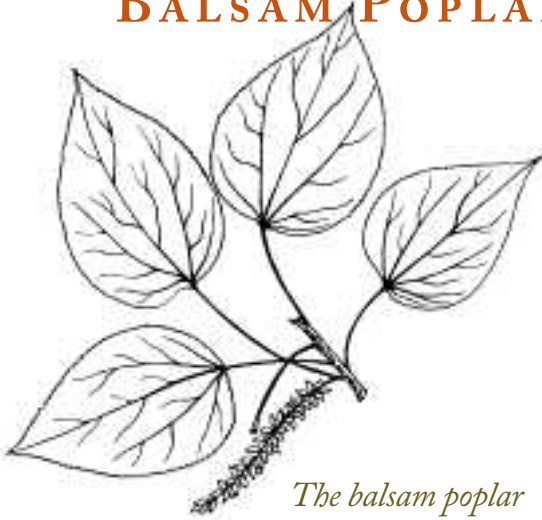




## BALSAM POPLAR *Populus balsamifera* L.



*The balsam poplar gets its name from the fragrance of the resinous, sticky buds.*

**B**alsam poplar, or Balm-of-Gilead, inhabits the borders of swamps and the low bottomlands along rivers throughout the state, except in York County. It gets its name from the fragrance of the resinous, sticky buds.

The tree is somewhat different from the two preceding poplars. The branches are stout, erect, more or less contorted at the ends and form an open, rather narrow head. It reaches a height of 30–70 feet, and a diameter of 15–30 inches.

The **bark** on young trees is smooth, or sometimes roughened by dark outgrowths, and is greenish to reddish-brown. On the trunk of old trees, it is gray and separated into broad, rough ridges.





The **leaves** are alternate, ovate, 3–5 inches long and 2–3 inches wide. They are deep dark green and shiny on the upper surface, light green and usually with rusty blotches on the under side. The edges are lined closely with small, rounded teeth. The petioles are round in cross section. In late summer the entire tree can have a rusty appearance.

The **flowers** are in catkins that appear early in spring just before the leaves.

The **fruit** ripens the end of May or early in June. Each seed is attached to a cottony mass, so that it is often carried long distances by the wind.

The **wood** is somewhat like that of quaking and bigtooth aspen, but it is not as strong. The wood is prone to decay while growing. Larger logs are sawed into landscaping ties. OSB—oriented strand board, a structurally engineered wood product—can include a small percentage of balsam poplar.



*Balsam poplar has large sticky buds that have a sweet fragrance.*



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**Balsam Poplar** Circumference: 99" Height: 93' Crown Spread: 50' Location: Yarmouth

