

WHITE ALDER

Alnus rhombifolia

TAG ALDER

Alnus rugosa

FAMILY:	Betulaceae	
GENUS:	Alnus	
SPECIES:	rhombifolia	rugosa
COMMON NAMES:	White Alder Giant Alder	Tag Alder Smooth Alder
POLLEN GRAINS:	Oblately flattened, angular 19 to 27 microns in diameter. Germ pores mostly 4 or 5 protruding and surrounded by lens shaped thickening. Apertures slit shaped. Exine smooth or slightly granular. Pairs of band-like thickenings of exine extend from pore to pore, one on each side of equator.	
POLLINATING PERIOD:	January to March	January to April
	Time of pollination governed by latitude and altitude.	
DISTRIBUTION:	California, Oregon, Washington, Eastern B.C. east to Rocky Mountains in Idaho.	Texas, Nebraska, Minnesota eastward to Atlantic seaboard from Florida to Maine.
ALLERGIC IMPORTANCE:	Generally of secondary importance.	

The alders are deciduous trees or shrubs with simple, petioled, toothed leaves. Flowers of both sexes are born on separate catkins on the same plant. Flowering precedes the opening of the leaf buds. The catkins occur in clusters usually on forked branchlets. The staminate catkins are pendulous and early deciduous. The pistillate catkins are small, erect and spike like. They ripen into ovoid woody cones which become spreading or pendulous at maturity and are persistent on the tree for a year or more, finally falling whole.

The White alder (A. rhombifolia) is a tree to 100 feet tall. The bark is whitish to gray and smooth. Leaves are serrate and tapering to the base and apex. The cones are 1/2 to 7/8 inch long. White alder is found along rivers and streams and is considerably planted as a street and yard tree in California.

Tag alder is shrub growing to 25 feet tall. The leaves are 2-5 in. long, finely serrated, and somewhat variable in shape. The apex is usually rounded, but sometimes pointed. The cones are about 1/2 in. long. Some cones occur without the usual short stem.

Tag alder is found along streams and in the wettest places, and like other alders is among the first to pollinate with the waning of winter.



Alnus rugosa
(Tag Alder) Bottom Illustration

Alnus rhombifolia
(White Alder) Top Illustration