

## TREES OF THE BOREAL FOREST

**Common Name:** Balsam Poplar

**Scientific Name:** *Populus balsamifera*

**Height:** up to 25 m tall

**Diameter:** 20-60 centimetres

**Distinguishing feature:** The buds of this tree are very sticky and fragrant with resin.

**Historical-** Thick pieces of balsam bark were carved into toy boats for children. The wood was also used for carving other toys and making spoons. In some northern regions, balsam poplar wood is the favorite fuel for smoking fish.

**Commercial-** Balsam poplar wood is used to make pulpwood, lumber, veneer, and high-grade paper and particle board. It can also be used to make boxes and crates. The short, fine fibres are used in tissues and other paper products.

**Natural-** Moose and other ungulates browse on young balsam poplar trees. In the spring, bees collect the sticky, aromatic resin from the buds and young leaves and use it to cement and waterproof their hives.

**Medicinal-** The buds that were collected during the spring contain salicin, which is found in salicylic acid, a main ingredient in Aspirin. Many native tribes also made a tea from the sticky buds and used it as a gargle for sore throats.



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