

Common Name: Weeping Mulberry – a grafted cultivar of the White Mulberry

Scientific Name: *Morus alba* (multiple cultivars). Part of the mulberry family, *Moraceae*,

This Tree in Colorado: Native to northern China

Growth Rate: Fast, 10 to 12 inches over a 4 to 6 year period.

Hardiness Zones: Zones 5-8; Weeping mulberry trees need sunlight to grow so they should be planted where there is very little shade. They also need lots of water for the first two years of growth as they are very thirsty trees. A weeping mulberry tree planted in a large sunlit open space may need to be staked as they get top heavy the first few years. Mulberry trees like water, heat, and are tolerant of any kind of soil.

Soil: Adaptable to a wide pH range from acidic to alkaline, but should not be planted in areas with poor drainage and winter-wet soils.

Shape: Weeping, umbrella shaped, depending on the cultivar they can get quite large so they should not be planted to close to homes, sidewalks or driveways. Height: Up to 15 feet. Spread: 8-15 feet

Leaves: Alternate, simple, undivided or lobed. 2 to 7 inches long and up to 6 inches wide. Usually dark green, but varies with the cultivar.

Bark: On younger branches an ashy-orange or light orange brown, on larger trunks a brown color.

Insects and Disease: No serious pests observed on this tree in Colorado.

Flowers and Fruit: Has male or female trees. Fruit can create a huge mess on the ground but are enjoyed by birds. Fruitless cultivars are preferred because they are male trees and will not produce fruit.

Cultivar Information:

The two pre-dominate types of weeping mulberry cultivars are:

- *Morus alba* 'Chaparral': Male tree with glossy green leaves which turn yellow in the fall. Height: 10-15 feet, Spread: 6-15 feet
- *Morus alba* 'Pendula': Female cultivar with greenish-white blooms. The resulting fruit is edible to humans and birds. Height: 6-8 feet, Spread: 8-12 feet.

Interesting Tidbit:

The White Mulberry is scientifically notable for the rapid plant movement of the pollen release from its catkins. The flowers fire pollen into the air by rapidly (25 μ s) releasing stored elastic energy in the stamens. The resulting movement is in excess of half the speed of sound, making it the fastest known movement in the plant kingdom.

Sources Used:

- Manual of Woody Landscape Plants by Michael Dirr
- About.com Landscaping
- Dayton Nursery's website
- eHow's website
- Wikipedia website

