

Feature Tree – 2009  
Weeping Willow

Weeping willow, *Salix babylonica* (Salicaceae family)

**Habit:** Large deciduous shade tree with long hanging branches that swing at the slightest breeze. From a distance this photogenic tree has a graceful, attractive appearance.

**Hardiness:** Zone 4 to 6

**Leaves:** Long, slender bright green leaves grow in an alternate pattern on the branch.

**Twigs:** On one year-old branch the bark is greenish-yellow.

**Bark:** The main trunk is gray and slightly furrowed.

**Flowers:** Trees are either male or female, so the flowers will appear on separate trees. Flowers are small and mostly inconspicuous.

**Fruit:** Fruit is a small capsule containing cottony seeds produced by female trees.

**Landscape Value:** This tree was introduced from China. In Colorado landscapes true *Salix babylonica* can be a large tree (i.e., 60 feet tall by 40 feet wide). Therefore it will need plenty of room to grow. It tolerates various soil types and alkalinity. Being a willow it likes plenty of water. There are several weeping willow cultivars available in the Colorado Nursery trade that are not true *Salix babylonica*, but carry the common name weeping willow. The most common of these cultivars is Niobe weeping willow (*Salix alba* 'Tristis').

**Diseases/Insects:** No major pests but aphids can be bothersome.

**Information Sources:**

*Trees of the Utah and the Intermountain West*, Michael Kuhns

*The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Trees – Western Region*,  
Elbert L. Little



