Alnus glutinosa

COMMON NAME

FAMILY Betulaceae

AUTHORITY Alnus glutinosa (L.) Gaertner

FLORA CATEGORY Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE ALNGLU

CONSERVATION STATUS Not applicable

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Widespread, especially common in the Waikato and Wairarapa, where it can be a problem weed.

DISTRIBUTION

Widespread, especially common in the Waikato and Wairarapa, where it can be a problem weed.

HABITAT Riparian areas along rivers and lakes.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Tree to c. 15m high (to c. 20m in cultivation). Bark dark brown, strongly fissured. Young shoots glabrous but glandular-viscid. Winter buds shortstalked, purplish. Petiole 7-15 mm long, often purplish. Lamina 4-10 x 2.5-10cm (to 14 x 13cm on vigorous vegetative shoots), broadly oblong to obovate, plicate in bud, hairy on veins beneath at first, soon glabrous except for tufts axillary hairs, serrulate to coarsely serrate, lobulate on basal vegetative shoots; veins in 6-7 pairs, prominently raised beneath; base usually cuneate; apex rounded to retuse. Buds stipitate, not enclosing female catkins in winter. Male catkins 3-8 together behind shoot apices, 2.5-7cm long (to 12 cm in cultivation), cylindric, opening in spring before lvs; peduncles to c. 5 cm long; bracts peltate, purplish; anthers yellow. Female catkins 3-7 together behind shoot apices, c. 5mm long, glandular. Cone (1)-1.3-1.7-(2) cm long, ellipsoid; scales becoming horizontal after dehiscence and persistent on tree. Nutlet c. 3mm long, broadly ovoid; wing narrower than nut.

SIMILAR TAXA

No similar tree in that habitat.

FLOWERING Late winter to spring





Alnus glutinosa. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Alnus glutinosa. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, Yellow

FRUITING

Summer

LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. Wind and water dispersed seed, also forms thickets by suckering. Fruiting is prolific (Webb et. al., 1988).

YEAR NATURALISED

1914

ORIGIN Europe, Asian and North Africa.

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental and timber tree also produces a yellow dye.

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Can be controlled mechanically or herbicidally depending on situation.

TOLERANCES

The plant prefers moist a situation and has been planted in colder areas (Webb et. al., 1988).

ETYMOLOGY

alnus: From an old Latin name for alder glutinosa: From the Greek gloeo 'glue', refers to the gummy leaves

ATTRIBUTION

Prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA). Features description and life cycle and dispersal and tolerances information from Webb et. al. (1988).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Webb, C.J.; Sykes, W.R.; Garnock-Jones, P.J. (1988). Flora of New Zealand Volume 4: Naturalised pteridophytes, gymnosperms, dicotyledons. Botany Division, DSIR, Christchurch.

Wikipedia - Alnus glutinosa

Popay et al (2010). An illustrated guide to common weeds of New Zealand, third edition. NZ Plant Protection Society Inc, 416pp.

Johnson PN, Brooke PA (1989). Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319pp.

MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/alnus-glutinosa/