



Paper Mulberry *Broussonetia papyrifera* (L.) L'Her. ex Vent.

Native Origin: Japan and Taiwan

Description: Paper mulberry is a deciduous tree in the Mulberry family (Moraceae) with milky sap that grows to a height of about 45 feet. The twigs are hairy reddish brown, and the bark is tan and smooth to moderately furrowed. The wood is soft and brittle with conical buds. Leaves are densely gray-pubescent, often lobed or mitten-shaped, and are alternate, opposite or whorled along the stem. The leaf margin is sharply toothed, the leaf base is heart-shaped-to-rounded with pointed tips, and the upper leaf surface is rough feeling. Paper Mulberry is dioecious, meaning male and female flowers are produced on separate trees. Male trees produce long clusters of flowers in mid-April. Female trees produce ball-shaped flower clusters that mature into red ball-shaped aggregate fruits. The fruits are reddish purple to orange, 3/4 - 1 inch in diameter, and appear in summer. Paper mulberry may be confused with the exotic white mulberry and native trees such as red mulberry, sassafras, basswood, and white poplar.



Male flower



Female flower

Habitat: Paper mulberry thrives in open habitats such as forest and field edges, and in disturbed areas. Floodplain forests and river terraces are especially prone to invasion by this tree species.

Distribution: Paper-mulberry occurs in twenty eight states in the Northeast, Southeast, and Midwest, and is reported to be invasive in natural areas in the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. It is also identified as an invasive weed in over a dozen countries around the world.



Ecological Impacts: Paper mulberry exhibits aggressive growth and quickly invades disturbed lands, competing with more desirable plant species. It has a shallow root system that makes the trees susceptible to blow over during high winds.

Control and Management:

- **Manual-** Pull seedlings by hand when the ground is moist. Cut young plants to the ground, repeating as necessary to control regrowth from sprouts.
- **Chemical-** Basal bark, cut-stem, hack-and-squirt, or injection methods of herbicide application are recommended. Triclopyr ester @ 61.6% a.i. with a 15-20% mix in horticultural oil will achieve effective control. Triclopyr amine @ 44.4% a.i. may be used with a 50% mix in water for cut stump applications. Follow state extension service and label directions.

References: www.nps.gov/plants/alien, www.duke.edu/~cwcook/trees/brpa.html, http://plants.usda.gov/cgi_bin/topics.cgi?earl=noxious.cgi, www.invasive.org