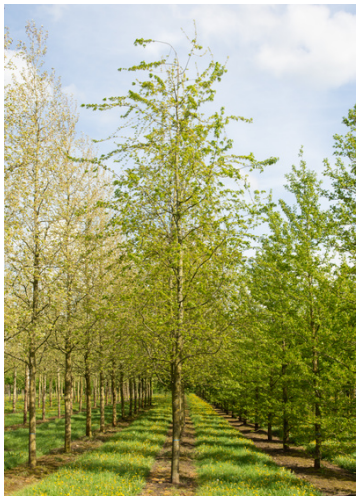


Populus simonii
Simon poplar, Simon's poplar, Chinese cottonwood



Populus simonii (Chinese balsam poplar) is native to northern China, North Korea and Mongolia. In 1862 the species was introduced to Europe by the French consul and botanist Gabriel Eugène Simon. In its natural habitat the tree grows on alluvial sandy soils that are periodically flooded. *Populus simonii* is the dominant tree species in these environments, accompanied only by a small proportion of *Salix babylonica*. In China it is the most widely used poplar species. As a young tree, the Chinese balsam poplar is narrow and almost columnar. With age it develops into a broad, dense and ovate crown, reaching twelve to fifteen meters in height and six to eight meters in width.

Populus simonii leafs out very early, in March, well before other tree species. The fresh green, inversely ovate leaves have a gray green underside and release a pleasant balsam scent when they unfold, which explains the Dutch name. In autumn the foliage turns a brilliant yellow. The young twigs are reddish brown and the branches tend to hang, causing the entire tree to move in the slightest breeze, which also makes it attractive in winter. Its habit is somewhat comparable to that of *Betula pendula*. This dioecious species flowers in May with yellow green and red pendulous catkins. Female trees produce capsules that release seeds surrounded by abundant cottony fluff.

Populus simonii prefers a sunny location on moderately light, fertile and moisture retentive soil. The species tolerates wind, heat, air pollution and frost. It is, however, less resistant to Marssonina and rust and is very sensitive to bacterial canker. Road salt is also poorly tolerated. The Chinese balsam poplar does not produce root suckers. *Populus simonii* is a beautiful tree for spacious planting areas and quickly creates a mature appearance in parks and gardens. It can even be planted in open paving, provided that the soil beneath has been well improved.

TYPES OF PLANTING
Tree types: standard trees

USE
Location: avenue, square, car park / parking lot, park, central reservation, large garden, cemetery, traffic areas, industrial zones, countryside | **Pavement**: none, open | **Planting concepts**: Landscape planting

CHARACTERISTICS
Crown shape: wide egg-shaped | **Crown structure**: dense | **Height**: 12 - 15 m | **Width**: 6 - 8 m | **Winter hardiness zone**: 4A - 6B

ASPECTS
Wind: tolerant to wind | **Soil**: loess, sabulous clay, light clay, sand, loamy soil | **Nutrient level**: moderately rich in nutrients, rich in nutrients | **Soil moisture level**: dry, moist | **Light requirements**: sun | **pH range**: neutral, alkaline | **Extreme environments**: tolerates air pollution, tolerates heat, tolerant to short-term flooding

PLANTKENMERKEN
Flowers: catkins, pendulous | **Flower colour**: red, yellow-green | **Flowering period**: May - May | **Leaf colour**: bright green, underside grey-green | **Leaves**: deciduous, obovate, leaf scented, serrate | **Autumn colour**: yellow, green | **Fruits**: striking, capsule, pappuses | **Fruit colour**: grey-brown | **Bark colour**: grey-green | **Bark**: furrowed, smooth, later on rough | **Twig colour**: red-brown | **Twigs**: bare, pendulous, long shoots | **Root system**: shallow, extensive, roots push up surface

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