

# Alder

*Alnus glutinosa*

## Family

Betulaceae (birch)

## Also known as

European alder, black alder

## Where is it originally from?

Eurasia, North Africa

## What does it look like?

Deciduous tree (<15 m high), with dark brown, fissured bark, often with two or three main trunks growing together. Purple or grey leaf buds turn into leathery, oblong toothed leaves (5-10 cm), with raised veins on the underside and rounded tips. Young leaves and buds are sticky with a resinous gum. Both male and female flowers appear on the same tree before leaves emerge. Narrow yellow male catkins (2-6 cm long) made up of many flowers dangle from branches, while small, round, green female catkins are grouped (3-8) on each stalk. Female catkins, once pollinated by male catkins via wind, develop into woody green cones (1-2cm long) that ripen to brown before releasing small (3mm), flat, waxy seeds (nutlets) that float on water.

## Why is it weedy?

Fruits prolifically, and forms thickets by suckering, forming dense stands in wet areas.

## How does it spread?

Wind, gravity and water. Suckers from the main plant.

## What damage does it do?

Invades wet natural areas, forming dense stands and crowding out other species.

## Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Moist or waterlogged sites and along rivers.

## What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Dig or pull out small plants (all year round).



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Photo: Trevor James



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