



*Medium Risk / Impact
in all regions of the Okanagan*

*Widespread in some areas, but limited distribution
in other locations with significant potential to spread in the region.*

Siberian Elm

Ulmus pumila

AKA: Chinese elm, dwarf elm, littleleaf elm

DESCRIPTION

- Bushy, deciduous tree that grows 9-18 m tall
- Open crown and slender, spreading branches
- Bark is dark grey, ridged and furrowed
- Oval, pointed leaves with toothed margins, dark green in summer and dull yellow-green in fall
- Green, drooping flowers without petals
- Seeds in small oval-shaped seed case with wings for wind dispersal

Siberian elm was first introduced to North America in the mid-1800s for its hardiness, fast growth, and ability to thrive in varying moisture conditions. The tree is still sold commercially, but is highly invasive when it escapes cultivation. It reproduces primarily by seed, but roots can resprout when top growth is damaged. Seeds are produced early in the spring and spread by the wind. The seeds hang in clusters and are inside fruit that is winged, round and smooth. Seeds can also be transported by water and animals.

HABITAT

Native to Northern China, eastern Siberia and Korea, Siberian elm can tolerate a wide range of conditions including long periods of drought, cold winters, poor soil conditions, high winds and low moisture. However, Siberian elm prefers sunny, open areas. It commonly grows on disturbed roads, moist streambanks, in pastures and rangelands, along roads and railroad rights-of-way. It will not tolerate flooding and does not often invade mature forests because of its high requirement for sunlight. In BC this invasive tree is widespread in the Southern Interior, particularly in the Okanagan.

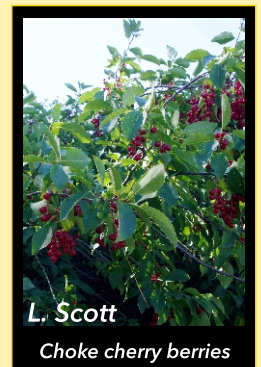


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Siberian elm

LOOK-A-LIKE

Siberian elm can sometimes be confused with other species of elms, and the native **choke cherry** (*Prunus virginiana*) when it is young. Siberian elm can be distinguished by its small toothed leaves (3-7 cm) that are asymmetrical at the base when they attach to the branch.



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Choke cherry berries

IMPACT AND RISKS

- Siberian elm is a preferred host of the elm seed bug, an invasive insect that is a nuisance household pest; large numbers of elm seed bugs can infest homes and businesses and stink when crushed.
- Siberian elm germinates readily and grows rapidly, particularly when moisture is available.
- It will quickly form thickets of seedlings when soils are disturbed, such as along utility corridors, fence lines, berms, river dikes and roadsides.
- It will quickly overtake native vegetation, especially shade intolerant species, and reduces forage for livestock and wildlife.

PREVENTION AND MITIGATION

- Do not trade or grow Siberian elm.
- Regularly patrol your property for Siberian elm and immediately control or remove new seedlings.
- Cooperate with adjacent landowners and encourage them to prevent invasive tree spread.
- Immediately re-vegetate disturbed, bare soils with a suitable seed mixture that provides dense, early colonization to prevent invasion.
- Do not move contaminated soils to a new area.

TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL

- Seedlings can be hand-pulled or dug out when the soils are moist
- Young trees (trunk diameter 8 cm or less) can be pulled out using a tree wrench; ensure the entire root is removed
- Mowing and brush-cutting can suppress trees, but are only effective if re-sprouts are continually cut throughout the growing season for multiple consecutive years; re-sprouts can be treated with herbicide
- Girdling can help to provide control; in the spring when trees are actively growing, manually cut away bark and cambial tissues around the trunk as close to the ground as possible using an axe
- Cut down large trees, ideally before seeds mature, and apply herbicides to the stump to prevent re-growth; re-cut sprouts and apply herbicide each growing season
- Deep stump grinding (at least 12" deep) is an effective control method. Ensure the entire stump and immediate root system are destroyed.
- Chipping is an effective means of disposal for limbs and trunks
- Chemical control is also an option; before applying herbicides, read the label for full use and precautionary instructions
- For further information on the selection and application of chemicals to protect your crop, contact AgriService BC at 1-888-221-7141 or email AgriServiceBC@gov.bc.ca
- There are currently no biological control agents (natural insect enemies) for Siberian elm in BC



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