

European black alder (*Alnus glutinosa*)

Family name: Birch family (Betulaceae)

Native range: Eurasia

NJ Status: Emerging Stage 0 – Absent or very rare. It is *highly threatening* to natural plant communities. Eradicate all detected occurrences.

General description:

- Colonial, deciduous tree 40'-65' tall
- Narrow pyramidal or columnar shape
- Often multi-stemmed
- Bark smooth and dark brown, but can show some shallow fissures with age
- Stalked buds, 0.25"-0.5" long



- 0.5"-1" long and 0.5" wide
- Ripening in October to November
- Water dispersed

Stalked buds, the native speckled and hazel alders also have stalked buds



Habitat:

- Forest, edge, meadow, roadside, landscaping
- Prefers wet or moist soil
- Can colonize poor soils

Commercial availability: Yes

Look-alikes:

Native alders are typically small tree or shrubs to 20'. European black alder leaves are rarely tapered at the point, while native alders leaves are typically tapered.

Leaves:

- Alternate, broadly round with rounded or notched tip
- 1"-3.5" long and 1"-3" wide
- Leathery
- Coarsely or irregularly doubly toothed
- Scalloped edges
- 5-8 principal veins
- Young leaves sticky and resin-coated
- Persist late into the fall
- No fall color, leaves fall green or brown



Notched leaf tip

Speckled alder (*Alnus incana*)

- Winter buds stalked
- Leaves with 8-14 principal veins
- Blooms before leaf out
- Male catkins 0.4"-0.6", bent downward
- Leaves doubly serrate, irregularly toothed



Hazel alder (*A. serrulata*)

- Winter buds stalked
- Leaves with 8-14 principal veins
- Blooms before leaf out
- Male catkins 0.4"-0.6", erect
- Leaves serrulate (fine, sharp, downward pointing teeth) and regularly toothed



Native alders have tapered leaf tips

Flowers:

- Male and female—inconspicuous flowers in clusters of 2-5
- Male—hanging, sticky catkins (0.6"-1.2" long)
- Female—cone-like, persistent
- Blooms in April before leaf out

Fruit:

- Individual seeds are hard, egg-shaped with short, narrow wings



Female catkin in seed, with lighter male catkin at right

Green alder (*A. viridis*)

- Winter buds sessile (lacking stem)
- Fruit broadly winged
- Blooms simultaneously with leaf out



Stalkless buds of green alder