

A Systematic Analysis of *Populus*: *balsamifera* *trichocarpa*



- Taking a comparative look at *Populus balsamifera* and its subspecies *trichocarpa*

Family: Salicaceae

- Commonly known as Willow family
- 2 Genera: --*Salix* L.
 - Populus* L.= 3 of 8 N. American species found in Alaska
- *Populus tremuloides*
- ***Populus balsamifera* subsp. *balsamifera***
- ***Populus balsamifera* subsp. *trichocarpa***

Keying the differences:

- A. Fruit capsules 2-parted, large, glabrous, rounded-to-pointy. *Populus basamifera*
- B. Fruit capsules 3-parted, pubescent, more rounded. *Populus trichocarpa*

Female catkins: capsule partitions



balsamifera= 2 parted capsule



trichocarpa= 3 parted capsule

Capsule shape & surface:



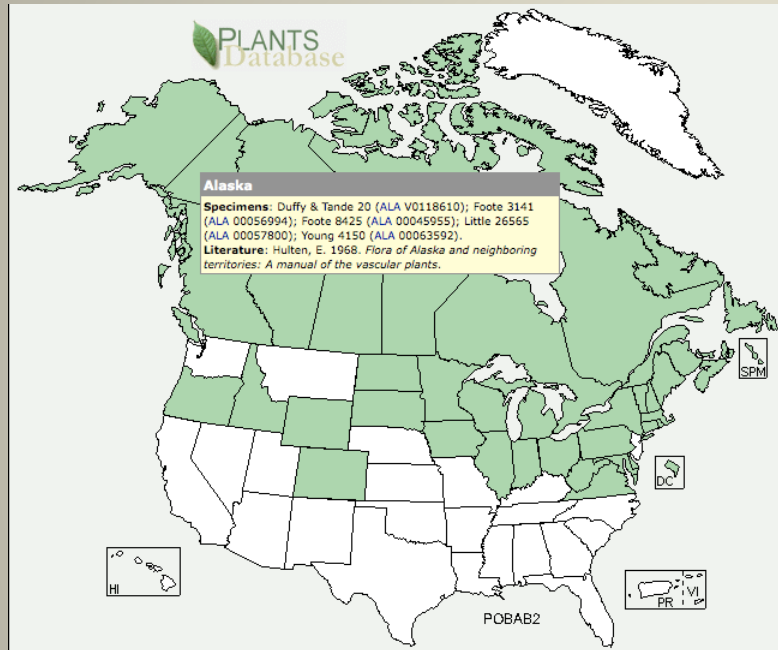
balsamifera= glabrous, pointed



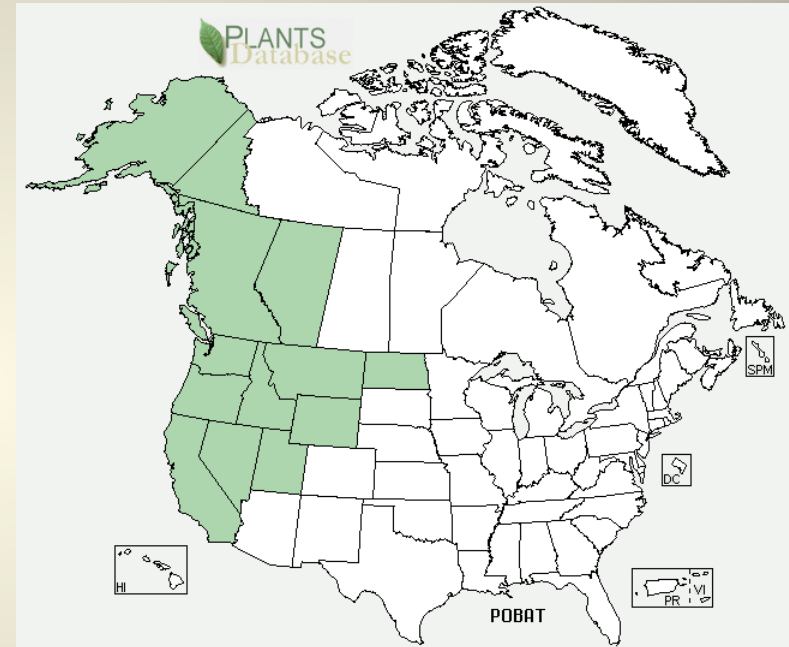
trichocarpa= pubescent, rounded

(photos taken by me, courtesy of UAF Herbarium)

North American Distribution:



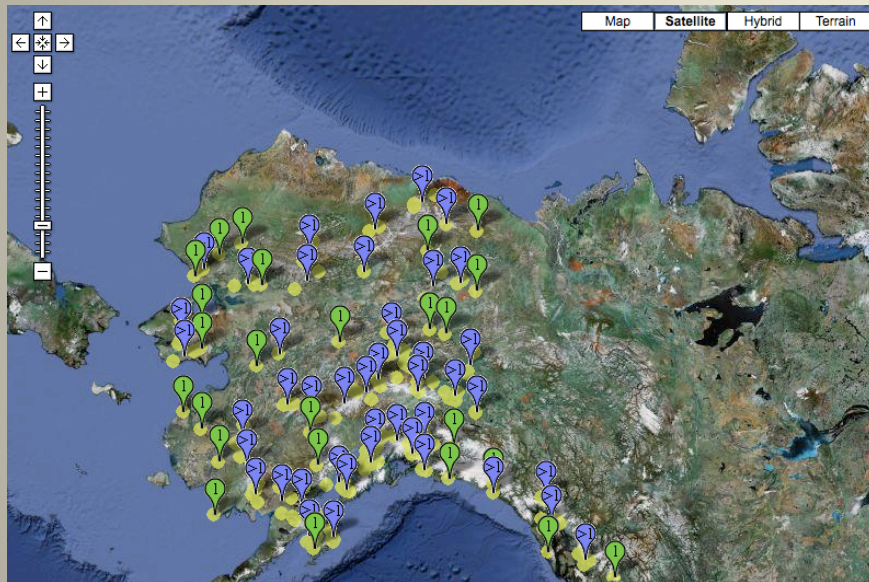
balsamifera



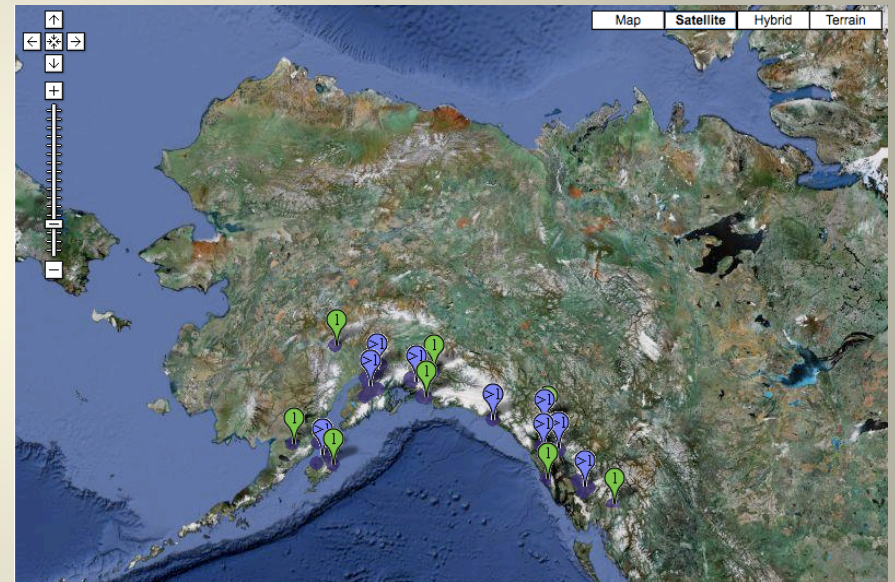
trichocarpa

(maps from <http://plants.usda.gov>)

Alaska Distribution:



Populus balsamifera



Populus trichocarpa