

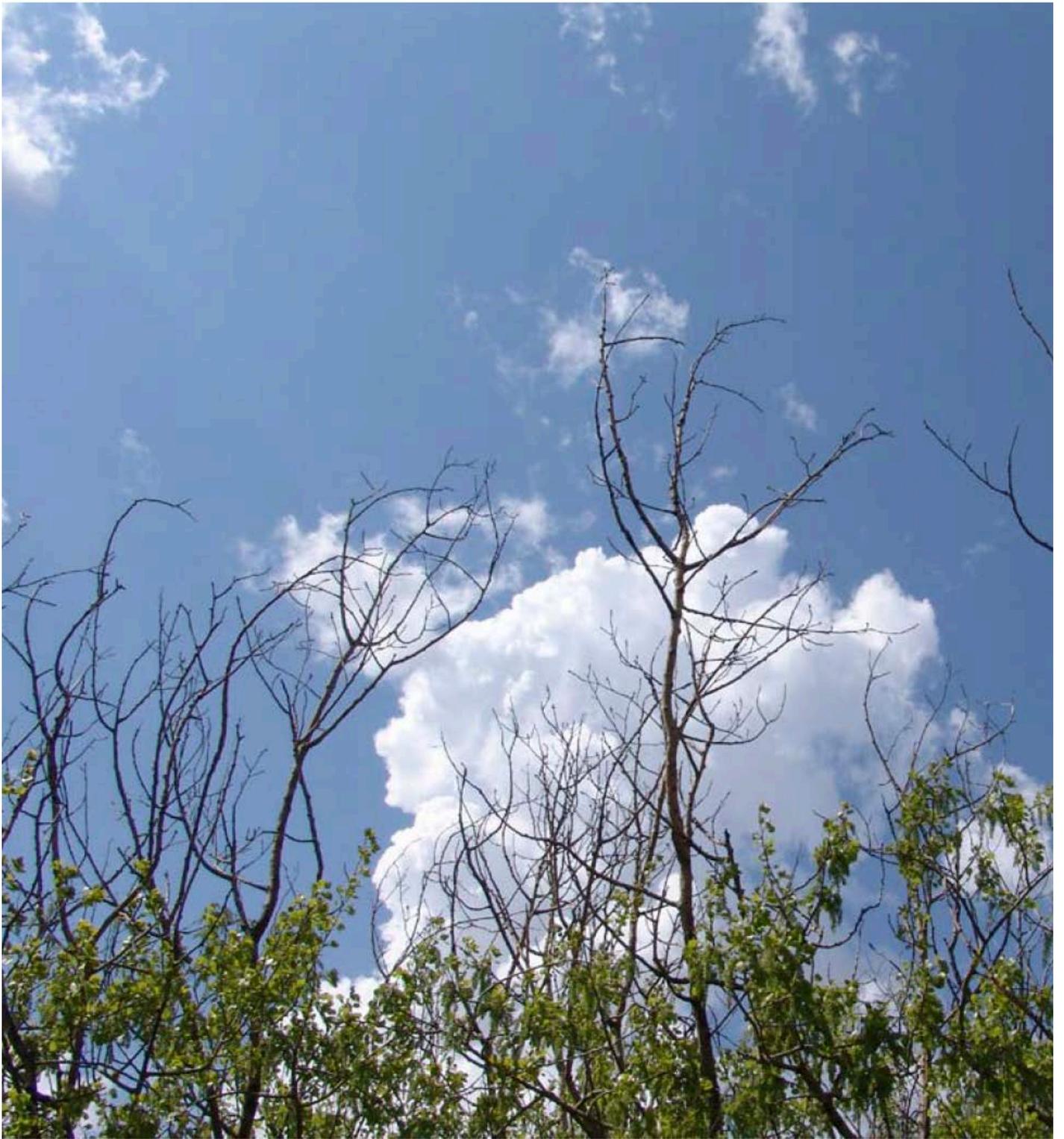
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Trees & Shrubs

In the Camrose region there are about 11 species of trees and 28 species of shrubs. These species have been divided into the habitats of “meadows,” “eroded slopes, disturbed areas and roadsides,” “hillsides,” “swamps and floodplains,” “streambanks,” and open woods.” For a complete list and abundance of these species found in the Camrose area see the January 2005 Riparian Health Inventory Report of the Camrose Creek and Mirror Lake Project Area by Cows and Fish. Also for more information on the identification of these species see *Plants of the Western Boreal Forest and Aspen Parkland* by Johnson et al. (1995), or *Trees and Shrubs of Alberta* by Kathleen Wilkinson (1990). For more information on the legends and stories associated with the trees and shrubs see *Old Man’s Garden* by Annora Brown (2000).



The Habitats

Meadows

Beaked willow

*Red osier dogwood

*Saskatoon

Chokecherry

Flat leaved willow

Wild red currant

Beaked hazelnut

Low bush cranberry

*Narrow leaved meadowsweet

High bush cranberry

*Aspen

White spruce

Western Mountain Ash

Eroded Slopes, Disturbed areas, Roadsides

Common caragana

*Narrow leaved meadowsweet

Nuttalls atriplex

Hillsides

*Saskatoon

Chokecherry

Thorny buffaloberry

Western Mountain Ash

Swamps, Flood plains

*Sandbar willow

Basket willow

Wild red currant

Lowbush cranberry

*Narrow leaved meadowsweet

Round leaved hawthorn

Nuttall's atriplex

*Balsam poplar

Manitoba Maple

Dry woods

Twining honeysuckle

Western mountain ash

*White birch

Oak

Jack pine





Open Woods

- *Common wild rose
- Wild red raspberry
- Buckbrush/snowberry
- Prickly rose
- Common caragana
- Northern Gooseberry
- Flat leaved willow
- *Canada buffaloberry
- Thorny buffaloberry
- Round leaved hawthorn

Streambanks

- Silverberry
- *Common wild rose
- Beaked willow
- *Red osier dogwood
- Buckbrush/snowberry
- Yellow willow
- Prickly rose
- Basket willow
- Flat leaved willow

Low bush cranberry

- Thorny buffaloberry
- High bush cranberry
- *Balsam poplar
- Manitoba maple
- Ash
- Green ash
- *White birch

Narrow leaved Meadowsweet

Narrow leaved meadowsweet is a slender, erect shrub with white flowers that grow in clusters¹. This shrub can be found in moist meadows, on the edges of marshes and on roadsides¹. The blooms of this shrub contains acetylsalicylic acid, which is the main ingredient in aspirin. Apparently, the name aspirin originates from a for “acetyl” and spir for Spiraea blooms, which is a part of the scientific name for this shrub, as the pain relieving component of aspirin is present in the blooms of this shrub¹. Therefore, a tea made from these flowers should help reduce fever and relieve pain¹.

Red osier dogwood

Red osier dogwood is a shrub that has tiny white flowers, and broad clusters of whitish to greenish blue berries¹. It is easily identified by its bright red branches, from which it derives its common name¹.

In the past the inner bark of the red osier dogwood was used as a tobacco, broken into tiny pieces after drying in the sun or over a fire^{2,3}. Native Americans also ate the berries of the shrub^{2,3}.

According to a Native American legend that Old man, who is a mythical being of all native tribes of the prairie, laid his freshly cooked meat on the branches of the red osier dogwood in order to cool it³. As a result the branches of the dogwood absorbed the grease from the meat. Since then the red osier dogwood oozes grease whenever it is held over a flame³.



Canada Buffaloberry

Canada Buffaloberry is a spreading to erect shrub that has smooth, grey bark and female and male flowers on separate plants⁴. The female flowers are reddish-yellow, while the male flowers are brown. This shrub is found on riverbanks or dry, pine or spruce woods⁴.

It is believed that the name of this shrub was derived from the Native American practice of using the berries of this shrub to flavour buffalo meat⁴. Another name for this shrub is soapberry which originates from the word Soopolallie, a Chinook Indian word meaning soapberry, due to the fact that the berries of this shrub have a tendency to foam when beaten with water⁴. These berries are iron rich and were used by many Native American tribes to treat blood disorders⁴

Sandbar Willow

This willow is a spreading shrub or a small tree that only grows to a height of about 3m. The branches of a young sandbar willow will be reddish or yellow brown, turning grey or grayish red when mature. This willow can be found in gravelly or sandy floodplains. Like all willows, due to their flexible nature, this willow was used by native Americans for the making of fish nets, ropes and woven bags, mats, and saddle blankets. The inner bark was also shredded and used as diaper linings and wound dressings. Willow roots were also used, together with grease from animal kidneys, to treat scalp sores and dandruff².



Aspen

The Aspen is a small to medium sized deciduous tree that has a greenish white bark that becomes black and rough near the bottom of the trunk and around the branches. Aspen trees can be found on dry ridges or in well-drained soils⁴. There is a parent tree that sends out an underground shoot from which there emerges suckers and other aspens grow, a clone of the parent tree. It is easy to identify a cluster of genetically identical aspen trees in the autumn as the cluster of trees loses its leaves at the same time¹.

The aspen tree was an invaluable tree for the Cree natives ¹. The buds, inner bark and leaves were used for medicine. A tea was brewed from the inner bark that was considered good for treating rheumatism, as well as a cough. A tea made from the outer bark was drunk to treat venereal diseases¹. The leaves were used to draw out the venom of insect bites and the white powder from the bark was used to stop bleeding. The young children also ate the sweet pulpy material just under the bark as a treat¹. Aspen tree branches also were used to make bowls, canoe paddles, tipi frames and toy whistles¹.



Aspen

Common Wild Rose

The common wild rose is a shrub that can grow from three to ten feet tall. It has red-brown, prickly, branched stems and a whitish to pink flower^{1,2,4}. The common wild rose is found in meadows, on riverbanks, on hillsides, or anywhere with moist soil^{1,2,4}. Although the bloom of the rose has captured the attention of many poets and writers, it is the rose hip which was considered the most important part of the plant by both native Americans and explorers of the new country². The rose hip is an edible part of the plant and contains high amounts of vitamin C, A, B, E, K, iron and calcium¹. Indeed only 5-6 rose hips provide an individual's daily necessity of vitamin C². However the rose hips should be eaten in moderation as they can cause diarrhea and the small seeds in the rose hip can cause irritation in the digestive tract^{1,2,4}. During WWII rose hips were collected in Britain and made into a syrup, which was called National Rose Hip Syrup. This syrup was administered to children to ensure that they received enough vitamins, especially vitamin C².

Some Native American tribes used the rose hips for decorations on clothing and necklaces and indeed some tribes believed that the rose provided protection from evil spirits and ghosts⁴.



Saskatoon

The Saskatoon bush grows in thickets and either remains a low, spreading shrub or grows erect to about 5m⁴. It can be found in open woods, in valleys, or on hillsides⁴. The berries of the bush are a red-purple to a deep purple colour and were a favorite of the Native Americans, who used the berry in the making of pemmican^{3,4}. The Saskatoon berry is high in iron and copper and was used by some native tribes to remedy stomachache and liver trouble⁴.

The Saskatoon berry and flower played a leading role in Native American ceremonies. During the celebration of the Sun Dance, the Saskatoon berries were used on the sacred alter in ceremonies³. Another ceremony included the burying of a saskatoon berry in the soil after holding it aloft towards the sun. It was a simple native custom of returning thanks to the earth for the bounty it provided the tribe³.



White Birch

The white birch is a slender, long branched tree that grows to the height of about 30m⁴. The mature bark of the tree is either white or reddish brown and has a tendency to peel off in papery strips. In fact the Latin *papyrifera*, which is found in the scientific name of the tree, means paper bearing ⁴. These strips of bark were used by early explorers to write letters and notes (Brown, 2000). White birch is found along streams and lakes in areas with sandy or silty soil⁴.

White birch is a hard wood and was used by Native Americans to build snowshoes, baskets, bowls and canoes⁴. Also the bark was boiled to extract an oil that contains methyl salicylate. This oil would be used to treat bruises, burns and wounds⁴.

It is said in a Native American legend that the appearance of the white birch, with its peeling bark, is a result of the anger of Old Man, a mythical being of the plains Indian tribes³. Due to the strong roots of the white birch, the tree prevented Old Man from being blown around by the wind, which he was enjoying. Since his fun was interrupted Old Man became angry at the white birch for having strong roots, which prevented it from being pulled up by the force of the wind when he grabbed onto it. As a result he flew into a rage and cut the white birch repeatedly with his knife, leaving the bark in papery shreds³.



White Birch

Balsam Poplar/ Black Poplar

Balsam poplar is a 25m tall, straight-trunked tree with ascending branches that can be found in the moist low-lying ground of forests, riverbanks and floodplains². The bark of the young Balsam poplar is smooth and green, however, when it matures it becomes dark grey, thick and deeply furrowed⁴.

The bark of the balsam poplar was used by Native Americans to treat rheumatism, stomach problems, coughs and kidney ailments⁴. The buds was used to treat congestion and to prevent scurvy. Also the resin from the buds were applied to the eyes to cure snow blindness⁴. The buds and the flowers together would be used to brew a tea to purify the blood. The entire tree itself would be used to make canoes and for fueling the fire, the ashes of which would be used as a kind of soap⁴. The roots of the tree could be split and used as rope⁴.



Balsam Poplar/ Black Poplar

