

Saltcedar



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(*Tamarix* spp.)

Saltcedar is the common name for several introduced shrubs or small trees, all of which can become weedy. The plant grows anywhere from 5 to 20 feet tall and has reddish-brown bark. The leaves are small, flat, segmented and resemble arbrvitaes. The flowers are pink to white, five-petaled, and appear from mid- to late-summer. The seed is similar in size and color to pepper and has a pappus that allows it to float on water which greatly aids in long-distance dispersal.

Saltcedar is native to Eurasia and was introduced into the U.S. to help reduce errosion on stream banks. The plant is very hardy and is advertised to grow “in sun or shade, and in wet or dry areas” from hardiness zones 2 to 7. Saltcedar can become a monoculture along lakes and waterways and quickly replace native riparian species. Saltcedar absorbs great amounts of water and even has dried up entire lakes. Besides from seed, saltcedar can spread vegetatively from roots, forming dense stands.

