

# Dr. *Nancy* BECKER

EARS, NOSE & THROAT ☉ ALLERGY THERAPY ☉ FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY

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## White Alder

*Alnus Rhombifolia*

## Speckled Alder

*Alnus Rugosa*

**Family:** Betulaceae  
**Genus:** Alnus  
**Species:** Rhombifolia

Betulaceae  
Alnus  
Rugosa

### **Common Names:**

White Alder

Speckled Alder  
Smooth Alder

### **Pollen Grains:**

Oblately flattened, angular 19-27 microns in diameter; germ pores mostly 4 or 5 protruding and surrounded by lens shaped thickening. Apertures slit shaped, exine smooth or slightly granular; pairs of band-like thickenings of exine from pore to pore, one on each side of equator.

### **Pollinating Period:**

January to March

January to April

Time of pollination governed by latitude and altitude.

### **Distribution:**

California, Oregon, Washington  
Eastern B.C., east to Rocky Mtns. in Idaho

Texas, Nebraska, Minnesota eastward to  
to Atlantic coast from Florida to Maine

### **Allergic Importance:**

Generally of secondary importance.

Alders are deciduous trees or shrubs with simple, petioled toothed leaves. Flowers of both sexes are born on separate catkins on the same plant. Flowering precedes the opening of the leaf buds. The catkins occur in clusters usually on forked branchlets. The staminate catkins are pendulous and early deciduous. The pistillate catkins are small, erect and spike like. They ripen into ovoid woody cones which become spreading or pendulous at maturity and are persistent on the tree for a year or more, finally falling whole.

The White Alder (*A. Rhombifolia*) is a tree to 100 feet tall. The bark is whitish to gray and smooth. Leaves are serrated and tapering to the base and apex. The cones are 1/2 - 3/4" long. White Alder is found along rivers and is considerably planted as a street and yard tree in California.

Speckled Alder is a shrub growing to 25 feet tall. The leaves are 2-5 inches long, finely serrated, and somewhat variable in shape. The apex is usually rounded but sometimes pointed. The cones are about 1/2" long. Some cones occur without the usual short stem. Speckled Alder is found along streams and in the wettest places; like other alders, it is among the first to pollinate with the waning of winter.