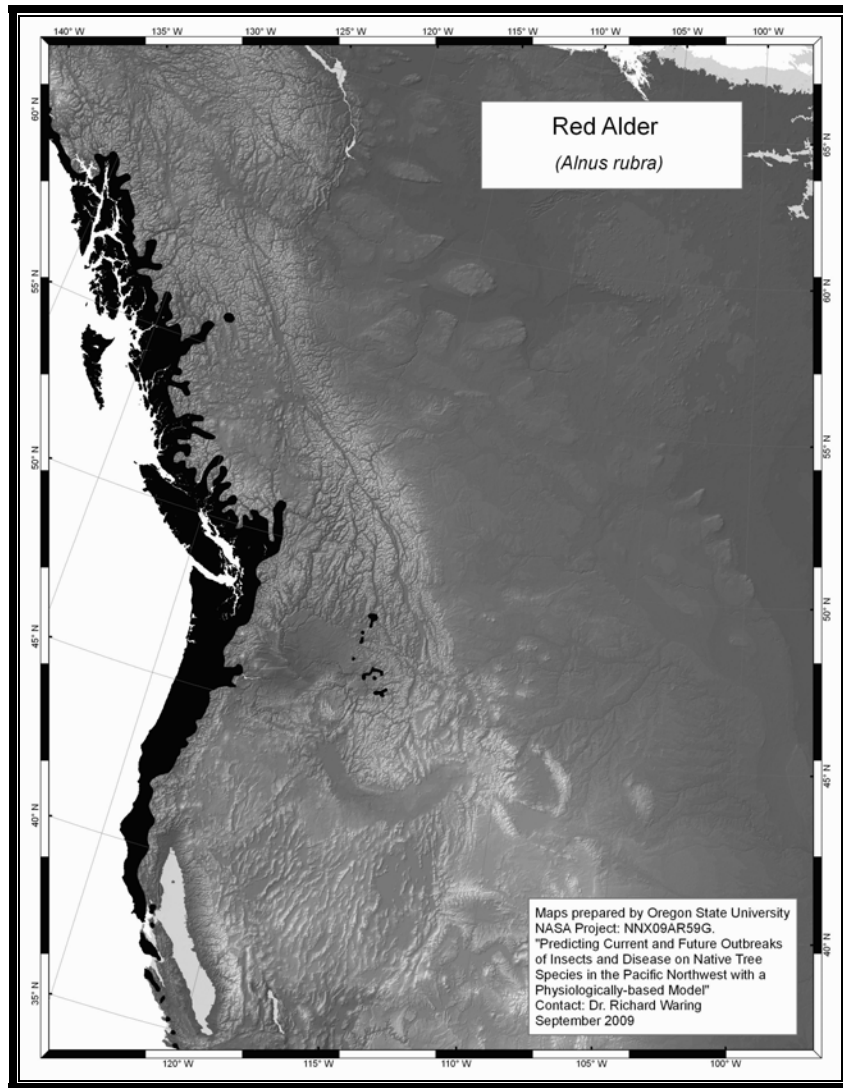


Species Silvics

Scientific Name: Red alder

Common name: *Alnus rubra*



Climate:

Red alder is usually found in low lying, moist forests, along streams and water bodies, and where soils are often wet. In British Columbia the species is restricted to the ocean moderated coasts, and is only found inland as far as 150km. This pattern continues in the United States from Washington to central California where it is not found further inland than 200km except for where it is found from northern Washington state to northern Idaho.

Wood and form:

Red alder usually grows to 25m in height. The crown is usually high due to competition with other trees, and the stem is straight. Red alder wood is moderate in density, but not high in strength. The wood has a reddish coloration.

Bark:

Red alder bark is smooth and light grey when the trees are young. The bark becomes a darker brown color with age and has some expansion fissures.

Seeds:

Red alder produces small (2mm) winged nutlets which are released in the fall. Seeds germinate well in open, mineral soil sites with adequate moisture.

Foliage:

Leaves are 7-13cm long with strong opposite venation. Leaf margins are strongly toothed. Leaves are dark green on top and a lighter, greyish-green color on their underside.

Ecology:

Red alder are very important as a soil improver. Bacteria associated with the roots create nodules which fix atmospheric nitrogen. Litter from this species also enriches the soil with nitrogen.

Uses:

Red alder is planted to improve site soil quality. The wood of red alder is used for furniture and smoking fish.