

Feature Tree – 2009
Weeping Willow

Weeping willow, *Salix babylonica* (Salicaceae family)

Habit: Large deciduous shade tree with long hanging branches that swing at the slightest breeze. From a distance this photogenic tree has a graceful, attractive appearance.

Hardiness: Zone 4 to 6

Leaves: Long, slender bright green leaves grow in an alternate pattern on the branch.

Twigs: On one year-old branch the bark is greenish-yellow.

Bark: The main trunk is gray and slightly furrowed.

Flowers: Trees are either male or female, so the flowers will appear on separate trees. Flowers are small and mostly inconspicuous.

Fruit: Fruit is a small capsule containing cottony seeds produced by female trees.

Landscape Value: This tree was introduced from China. In Colorado landscapes true *Salix babylonica* can be a large tree (i.e., 60 feet tall by 40 feet wide). Therefore it will need plenty of room to grow. It tolerates various soil types and alkalinity. Being a willow it likes plenty of water. There are several weeping willow cultivars available in the Colorado Nursery trade that are not true *Salix babylonica*, but carry the common name weeping willow. The most common of these cultivars is Niobe weeping willow (*Salix alba* 'Tristis').

Diseases/Insects: No major pests but aphids can be bothersome.

Information Sources:

Trees of the Utah and the Intermountain West, Michael Kuhns

The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Trees – Western Region,
Elbert L. Little



