



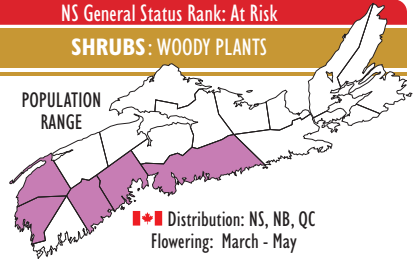
Silky Willow

Salix sericea

NS General Status Rank: At Risk

SHRUBS : WOODY PLANTS

POPULATION
RANGE



© SEAN BLANEY



Catkins

© WILL COOK



Lance-shaped leaves

© MARTIN THOMAS



Silvery undersides

© MARTIN THOMAS

SIZE: Up to 4 m tall.

LEAVES: Lance-shaped with small teeth along the edges, 6-10 cm long and 1-2.5 cm wide. The upper surface is dark green with a few small hairs and the lower surface is densely covered in short, straight, silvery hairs.

STEM: Stems and branches are brittle, hairy or smooth, and grey-brown to violet. Twigs vary in color from red-brown to violet to mottled yellow-brown and are sparsely to densely hairy.

FLOWERS: Appear just before the leaves in the spring. Male and female flowers (catkins) are typically 1.5 to 4 cm long.

FRUITS: Short, hairy capsules, 1 mm wide.

NOTES: Willows are dioecious, which means that individual plants exclusively bear male or female flowers (catkins).



Habitat:

Wet to moist riverbanks, lakeshores, thickets and bogs.

Interesting point: Willow bark and sap contains salicylic acid, which has long been used to alleviate pain and served as the inspiration for Aspirin. It is also a common ingredient in acne medication.

Similar species: There are several other willow species and hybrids that can appear similar. Silky Willow is most distinguishable from other species by its leaves which are densely covered in silky silvery hairs on their lower surface.