

Grey willow (*Salix cinerea*)



Tree



Several sturdy branches arise at ground level



Yellow or silky white catkins in spring

Grey willow is a deciduous, shrubby, thicket-forming small tree, sometimes growing as high as 5 m. Like many other willows, it prefers wet areas, but can establish in any open, disturbed area.

Several sturdy branches arise near ground level, and the tree has a rounded crown. Its oval leaves are shiny above and covered with soft, usually grey hairs underneath. Abundant yellow or silky white catkins appear before the leaves in early spring.

The roots of grey willow send up suckers that grow into new plants, allowing the plants to form dense thickets. Cut stems will root where they fall. It also spreads by its wind dispersed seeds.

Cut stumps or branches will re-grow readily unless treated with herbicide. Smaller plants can be sprayed with herbicide in summer, but full coverage is essential. Alternatively the tree can be cut down and the stumps and cut branches treated with herbicide, or holes drilled in the stem or a frill cut made right round the trunk and herbicide applied. This should be done in summer or autumn.

Contact your Regional Council for advice on control methods.