



The UC Davis Center for Plant Diversity  
(J.M. Tucker Herbarium (DAV) and Beecher Crampton Herbarium Collection (AHUC))  
Department of Plant Sciences MS #7, University of California, Davis  
One Shields Avenue, Davis, CA 95616-8780

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29 December 2021

Allyson Rogers, Supervising Deputy Coroner  
Sacramento County Coroner's Office  
4800 Broadway, Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95820

Dear Allyson Rogers,

I picked up a leaf fragment from your office yesterday for identification, belonging to Case # 21-08290, Barcode 639164. This leaf fragment was taken from the stomach of a deceased person. It measures 1 1/8" by 1 7/8" and includes a portion of the center of one leaf with a portion of one major vein and two adjacent secondary veins joined by a single bronchiodromous loop. The leaf tissue retains flexibility and some green color, so the leaf was likely ingested when fresh.

In comparing this leaf fragment to fresh leaves and to our extensive library of pressed specimens, we determine that this leaf fragment is a match to Morus alba, the white mulberry. The sample matches white mulberry specimens in all traits examined: upper and lower leaf surface texture, hairiness, venation pattern, intercostal tissue patterning, the frequency, size and shape of the stomata and the embeddedness of the veins relative to the plane of the leaf.

White mulberry is a tree frequently planted as a landscaping ornamental and street tree in the Sacramento area. The fruits (summer) are edible, although most ornamental varieties are fruitless. Powdered leaf extract is used in Chinese medicine. This species is the primary food of commercial silkworms. Young mulberry leaves (early summer) are occasionally promoted on the US internet as a forage food, but not at this time of year when the leaves are tough, yellowing and have mostly fallen off of the trees in the past few weeks.

White mulberry is not toxic. I compared the specimen to lethally toxic species that are known to be planted or are native in the Sacramento area and found no matches. I can provide a list of the toxic and non-toxic species I compared this specimen to and the reasons why they do not match upon request.

I was assisted in this identification by Professor Dan Potter and Emeritus Professor James Doyle, both of U.C. Davis.

Sincerely,

Alison Colwell, Curator