“Tree of the Month” with Forester Fred

Look at this massive Plains Cottonwood, Populus deltoids var. monilifera, found in Veterans Park. With a diameter of 60 inches, “that is five feet around” this may be Billings Largest Park Tree.

Cottonwoods can easily grow over a 100’ tall in Billings, their branches can spread 50-75’ wide, “that is a lot of shade.” Zone 3a to 9. Plains Cottonwood can be easily identified by their stature as well as their triangular toothed leaves. They can live well over 100 years old but often begin to fall apart and die out before reaching a century old.

From June through July silk or cotton is released carrying seeds which plug up air conditioners and lawnmowers around. Many cultivars have been developed that are cottonless (males).

Trees from the Poplar family such as Cottonwoods are beautiful trees that provide tons of shade but do not make for the best trees around houses and playgrounds. They grow up fast several feet per year but also fall apart fast.

Their wood is used for many things, toothpicks being one use.

Come enjoy the shade in Veterans Park.