



white ash

Fraxinus americana

Kingdom: Plantae
Division/Phylum: Anthophyta
Class:
Order:
Family:

FEATURES

The deciduous white ash tree may grow to a height of 100 feet and a trunk diameter of four feet. Its gray bark has diamond-shaped furrows between flat-topped sometimes scaly ridges. The pinnately compound leaves are arranged oppositely on the stem. Each leaf has five to nine lance-shaped leaflets which may be five inches long and about two and one-half inches wide. Leaflets are shallowly toothed along the edges, green and smooth on the upper surface and pale and smooth or hairy on the lower surface. Male (staminate) and female (pistillate) flowers are arranged in clusters and located on separate trees. The tiny, purple flower lacks petals. The paddle-shaped, winged fruits are about two and one-half inches long and one-fourth inch wide, each containing only one seed.

BEHAVIORS

The white ash may be found statewide in Illinois. This tree grows in bottomland forests and on wooded slopes. The white ash tree flowers in April and May before its leaves unfurl. Its heavy, strong wood is used in making furniture, for baseball bats, for tool handles, for interior finishing, for making oars and for making polo mallets.

HABITATS

- bottomland forests
- coniferous forest
- southern Illinois lowlands
- upland deciduous forest

ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: statewide

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.
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