

HACKBERRY

Celtis occidentalis L.

OTHER COMMON NAMES: Common hackberry, Sugarberry.

FORM: Rarely more than 40-50 feet high, on rich soils may reach a height of more than 100 feet; in the open the trunk is short, breaking up into stout spreading limbs 8-10 feet above the ground to form a more or less round-topped crown.

BARK: Grayish-brown, 1-1 1/2 inch thick, may be smooth or more or less thickly covered and roughened by irregular wart-like excrescences or by long ridges.

TWIGGS: Slender, somewhat shiny, occasionally slightly downy, brownish, covered with scattered raised lenticels.

LEAVES: Alternate, simple, broadly ovate and somewhat falcate, 2 1/2-4 inches long, 1-2 inches wide, acuminate at the apex, rounded and inequilateral at the base, coarsely serrate except at the ends, rough on upper surface, 3-ribbed, somewhat hairy on prominent veins below.

FLOWERS: Three kinds; staminate cymose from buds at the base of the growth of the season; the perfect and pistillate, solitary or in few-flowered fascicles from the axils of the upper leaves, calyx pale yellowish-green, divided into 5 linear scarious lobes.

FRUIT: Thick skinned, subglobose or oblong, long-stalked, one-seeded drupe, about 1/4 inch long, tipped with persistent style.

WINTER BUDS: 1/4 inch long, ovate, sharp-pointed, appressed, bud scales sometimes longitudinally striated and dark margined.

WOOD: Heavy, not strong, coarse-grained, rather soft, pale yellow with white sapwood.

USES: Pulp, rough lumber. Historical uses: boxes, crates.

HABITAT: Prefers rich soil, also grows on gravelly uplands, usually solitary.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: Pith is chambered; dark fruit; leaves ovate, short acuminate; corky bark usually present on old trees.

DISTRIBUTION IN ALABAMA: Statewide.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. A flowering branch | 8. A fruiting branch |
| 2. Diagram of a flower | 9. Vertical section of a fruit |
| 3. A staminate flower before the straightening of the filaments | 10. A fruit cut open transversely |
| 4. A staminate flower expanded | 11. An embryo |
| 5. A perfect flower | 12. An embryo partly displayed |
| 6. Vertical section of a perfect flower | 13. A winter branchlet |
| 7. An ovule | |



Celtis occidentalis L.