

SOUTHERN CATALPA

Catalpa bignonioides Walt.

OTHER COMMON NAMES: Common catalpa, Indian-bean, Catawba , Cigar-tree.

FORM: Commonly 25-40 feet high, may reach a height of 60 feet, with a diameter of 3 feet; trunk usually short, crooked, may be angular and unattractive, with long heavy brittle branches forming a broad head.

BARK: 1/4-1/3 inch thick, light brown tinged with red, separating on the surface into large irregular scales.

TWIGS: At first, green shaded with purple; their first winter thickened at the nodes, slightly puberulous, lustrous, light orange color or gray-brown, with a slight glaucous bloom, and with large pale lenticels, ultimately reddish-brown.

LEAVES: Opposite or whorled, broad, ovate, simple, 6-10 inches long, 4-5 inches broad, heart-shaped at base, acute at apex, margin wavy or entire.

FLOWERS: Perfect, showy, borne on slender pedicels in terminal many-flowered compact panicles, 8-10 inches long, corolla white, spotted with purple, nearly 2 inches long.

FRUIT: A pod-like capsule 6-20 inches long, 1/4-1/3 inch thick at the center, tapering toward each end, capsules remain closed in the winter, finally splitting into two concave valves freeing the seed; seed numerous, oblong, compressed, winged, wings entirely surround the seed.

WINTER BUDS: Terminal bud usually absent, lateral buds small, imbedded in the bark, with loosely imbricated scales, usually not more than inch long.

WOOD: Light, soft, not strong, coarse-grained, very durable in contact with the soil.

USES: Landscaping.

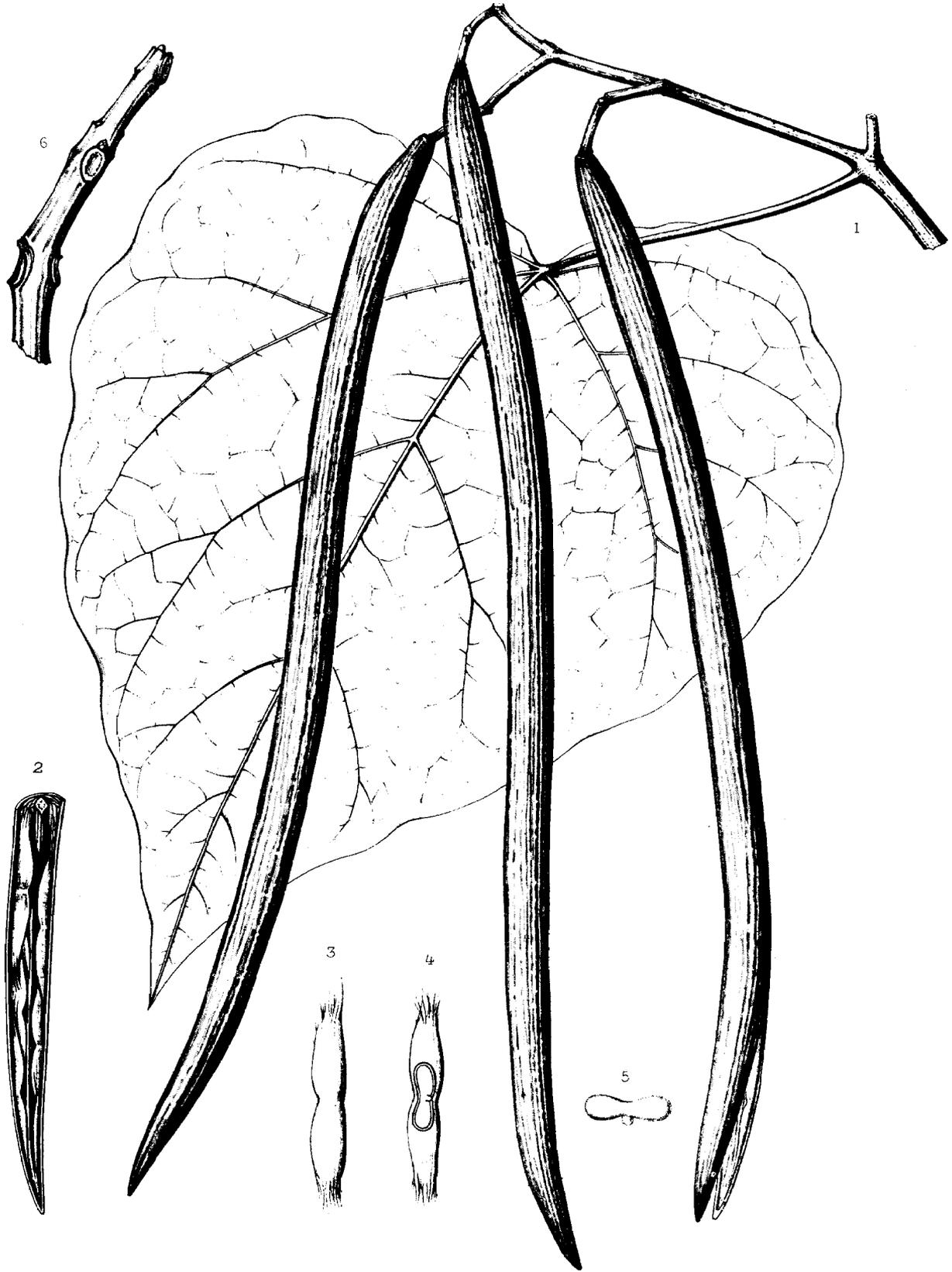
HABITAT: Prefers moist, fertile soil along streams and river banks, also found in drier situations.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: Large panicles of flowers; cigar or bean-like fruit characteristic in autumn and winter; bundle scars arranged in an ellipse; wings surround seed and are fringed at the ends.

DISTRIBUTION IN ALABAMA: Widely over the state.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1. A fruiting branch | 4. Vertical section of a seed |
| 2. The end of a fruit, one of the valves removed | 5. An embryo |
| 3. A seed | 6. A winter branchlet |



Catalpa bignonioides Walt.

Plate 1