



WHITE ASH

Fraxinus americana

White ash is a deciduous tree and is one of the world's largest ash species, growing into a narrow pyramidal shape when it is young but filling out into a more rounded shape when mature. It has a tall, straight trunk and dense crown. Its rapid growth makes it a good species for reforestation projects. The lifespan of white ash can reach 200-250 years.

White ash is a medium to large sized tree, growing to be 30 metres tall. It has a dense crown which measures 15 to 20 metres across. The trunk of the white ash reaches 150 cm in diameter.



TREE

IDENTIFICATION

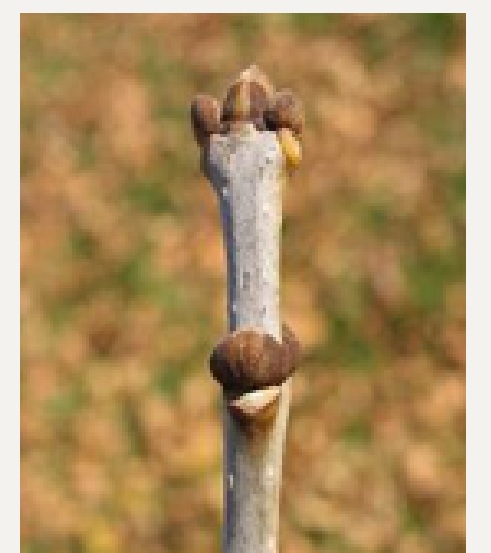
White ash has large, opposite, compound leaves -commonly with 7 leaflets but may also have 5 or 9 leaflets.

The leaflets are oval, tapering at both ends with finely toothed margins. The leaflets turn a bronze to purplish colour in the fall.

White ash has a very blunt terminal bud that is reddish to dark brown. White ash can be distinguished from green ash by the grayish-white coating beneath the buds.

The samara, which contains the white ash seed, is 2.5-5 cm long and is a food source for many birds such as red-winged blackbirds, evening grosbeaks and purple finch.

At maturity, the bark of the white ash is thick and dark with diamond shaped fissures.





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HABITAT & RANGE



White ash is found across most of Eastern North America. White ash tolerates a wide range of soil conditions. It prefers moist, well-drained soils and full sun but will tolerate some shade. It can be found growing in moist areas, normally near river beds, valleys and along flood plains or in woodlands and open fields.



It occurs from Eastern Canada and south to Texas and northern Florida.



INTERESTING FACTS

Considered a rare tree in PEI due to deforestation.

Its food for the caterpillar of the mourning cloak and tiger swallowtail butterflies.

Has strong wood which is used in tool handles and items like canoe paddles.

Susceptible to the Emerald Ash Borer, found in Eastern Canada and the North Eastern States. The Emerald Ash Borer attacks and kills all species of true Ash trees. This insect has not been found in PEI as of 2020.

References

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