

C A R O L I N E W U R S T

the Shellbark Hickory



Life history information

- It is monoecious and produces flowers from April to June after the leaves appear. Male flower develops from the axils of the leaves of the previous season or from the inner scales of the terminal buds at the base of the current growth while the female flower appears in short spikes or peduncles terminating in shoots of the current year. The fruit ripens from September to November. (Pollen is wind disseminated). Shellbark nuts are the largest produced by any hickory! (aka King Nut Hickory)

What is the geographical range?

-It is widely distributed, but nowhere common. However, this species is most prominent in the lower Ohio region and south along the Mississippi River to central Arkansas. It is also greatly found in the swamp rivers of central Missouri and the Wabash River region in Indiana and Ohio.

What are the characteristics of the leaves?

-Broad, compound, pinnately compound, margins toothed, 3 end leaflets usually distinctly larger than basal leaflets, 7-11 leaflets and leaves often very large.

What are characteristics of the fruit?

-It is considered to be an "other" fruit because it is not cone, winged, acorn, or in a pod or capsule. The nut is in a thinner husk (.25" or more thick), yellowish white and pointed at the base.

What is its susceptibility to insect and fungal pests?

- Although most hickories are often affected by many insects and diseases, the shellbark hickory is not. However, seed production can be reduced by many insects such as the pecan weevil and the hickory shuckworm. It is free of disease but is a host for a variety of fungi. (More than 130 fungi have been identified from the species of Carya!) It is a big clean up as it constantly rains itself.

Are there any special uses for this tree?

- The nuts are used for food by ducks, wild turkey, squirrels, quail, chipmunks, deer, foxes, raccoons, and white-footed mice. There are also few plantations that have been created for nut production due to the sweet kernel. The wood is used for furniture, tool handles, sporting goods, veneer, fuelwood, and charcoal.

What are the twigs like?

Orange-brown by the first winter, and have terminal and lateral buds that are larger than most other trees. 1st year twigs are often the same width as compared to the terminal bud. Has largest leaf scars on its twigs as compared to any other Hickory.

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION:

What is another name for the Shellbark Hickory?

- a. Shaggy bark b. Fruit Bearer
- c. King Nut d. Orange Stemmed
- e. Broad Leaved

References

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