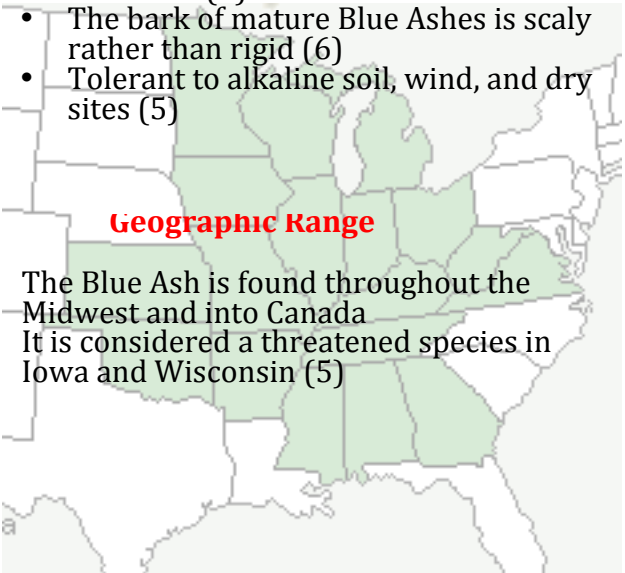


# Blue Ash (*Fraxinus quadrangulata*)

## Life History

- Immature twigs are typically square rather than round like other Ashes
- Unlike other Ashes east of the Mississippi River, the Blue Ash is dioecious (6)
- The bark of mature Blue Ashes is scaly rather than rigid (6)
- Tolerant to alkaline soil, wind, and dry sites (5)



## Geographic Range

- The Blue Ash is found throughout the Midwest and into Canada
- It is considered a threatened species in Iowa and Wisconsin (5)

## Size

- At maturity, the Blue Ash can reach heights at tall as 100 feet with a trunk diameter of 3' (3) an up to 50 feet wide (1)

## Leaf Characteristics

- The Blue Ash's leaves are pinnately compound and oppositely arranged (1)
- Each leaf of the Blue Ash contains between 7 - 11 leaflets (5)
- Leaflet length ranges from 2" - 5" and are lance shaped (1)
- The leaf margins are sharply serrated
- During the summer the leaves are dark green, and the autumn foliage is yellow (2)

## Fruit Characteristics

- Samaras between 1" - 2" are the fruit of the Blue Ash (1)
- The samaras, which are found in clusters, fall off the tree during the autumn (5)
- As the fruit matures, it turns from a green to tan color

## Economic Importance

- Traditionally, the wood of the Blue Ash has been used to build houses (5)
- It is not as widely available for commercial use like other Ashes (5)
- It is also harvested or firewood and to make furniture and tools (6)

## Insect and Fungal Pests

- Like other Ash species, the Blue Ash is at susceptible to borers like the Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) from Asia (6)
- The Blue Ash is also susceptible to anthracnose diseases causing the leaves to develop brown and black spots and blotches. During prolonged wet weather, leaves may drop from the tree

## Multiple Choice Question (3)

The Blue Ash differs from other Ash species due to its:

- Broad, square fruit tips
- Four-angled twigs
- Inner bark that turns blue
- All of the above
- None of the above

## Flower Characteristics

- The Blue Ash is dioecious, and each flower is "perfect" meaning it has both male and female parts (1)
- Typically very small, the flowers are purple in color with no petals (5)
- The flowers are produced prior to the leaves during the spring (5)

## Stem Characteristics

- The Blue Ash twigs are very unique and distinctive compared to other Ashes
- The twig appears squared rather than round

## Interesting Facts

- Unlike other Ashes, the Blue Ash is less susceptible to storm damage due to its slow growth, which adds to the strength of the wood
- The Blue Ash gets its common name from the color the inner bark produces when it is exposed to air or crushed and mixed with water

## References

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