

Leaves, Limbs, Needles and Boughs

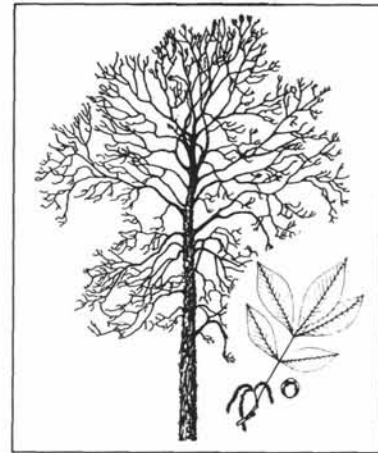
by Fred D. Opperman

This month's selection will be the Shagbark Hickory, *Carya ovata*. This tree has been around since before the first glacier swept into North America. This tree makes up about 15% of the oak-hickory forests of Illinois. It is one of our hardest species and a valuable tree for its lumber. It is tough, hard and heavy, weighing about 50 pounds per cubic foot. The wood is used mostly for tool handles, furniture, gun stocks, and implements that require great strength. It is not usually used in construction because it tends to decay quickly if exposed to the elements.

Another major benefit of the hickory is its value to wildlife. Squirrels, wild turkeys and deer feed extensively on the nuts. These trees are tall, straight and long lived. They can grow to 300 years. Most will reach a height of 60 to 80 feet. The largest Shagbark Hickory in Illinois is in Clark County and it is 88 feet tall and a crown of 90 feet, with a circumference of 10 feet 3½ inches. There are taller hickories, but none with the crown that the Clark County tree has.

Hickories are found on most golf courses if a oak-hickory forest once existed. This is a native tree that needs to be added to your tree inventory. They can be transplanted, if done so

when quite young and by over sizing the ball or planted by the use of a spade truck.



Leaves: Alternate, pinnately compound, 5 leaflets rarely 7, 4 to 6" long, elliptic to oblong lanceolate, serrate and densely ciliate. (ciliate: marginally fringed with hairs, often minutely so and then termed "ciliolate")

Bud: Imbricate, terminal 2/5 to 4/5" long, broadly ovate, rather blunt-pointed, brown with 2 to 4 visible, overlapping, pubescent, loose fitting scales.

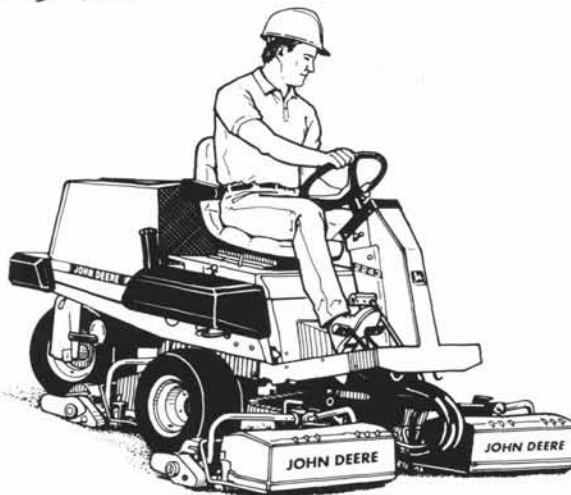
Bark: On old trunks shagging characteristically into long flat plates which are free at the base or both ends.

Credit: "Manual of Woody Landscape Plants" by Michael A. Dirr and "Illinois Department of Conservation"

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