

Leaves, Limbs, Needles & Boughs



by Fred Opperman

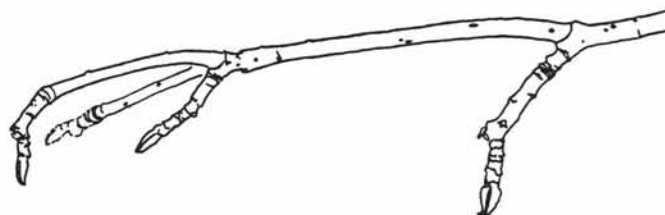
This month's selection is an understory tree, that is a tree that is usually found along the fringes and in the shade of others around it.

Cornus alternifolia — (kor'nus al-ter-ni-fo'li-a), Commonly known as Pagoda Dogwood.

Leaves: This is the only dogwood with alternative leaves. Simple, oval to ovate, pointed at the tip, tapering or rounded at the base. 2 to 5" long, 1 to 2½" wide. Medium to dark green in color. Mostly smooth on the upper surface and hairy on the underside.



Stem: Slender, usually greenish to reddish, purplish brown, shiny; leaf scars alternate.



Buds: Narrowly ovoid ¼" long, pointed and smooth.

Flowers: Several in a group round-topped clusters that appear in May and June, each flower is white ⅓ inch in diameter with 4 narrow petals. Fragrant for up to 7-10 days. Flowers are not showy.

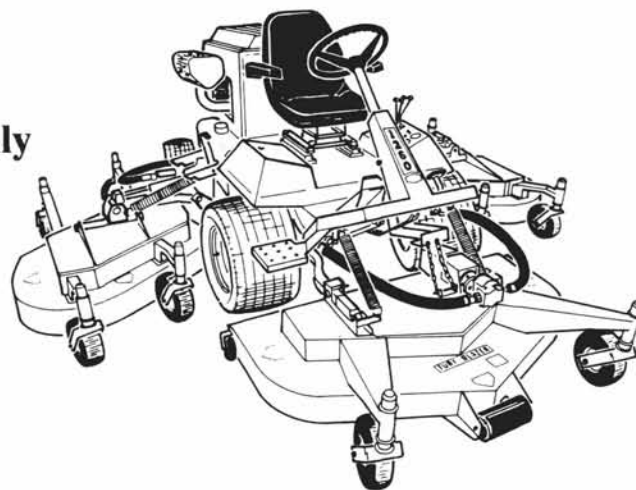
Height: Up to 20' with a flattened crown and about as wide.

Habit: Spreading low branched tree or shrub with very horizontal branching forming tiers. Slow growing. Excellent for naturalizing.

Wood: Heavy and close grained. Used to tool handles.

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