

CHINKAPIN OAK

Quercus Muehlenbergii

Secondary Name:

Chinquapin Oak

Leaf Type: Deciduous

Texas Native: yes

Tree Description:

A medium or large tree reaching a height of 70 feet and a trunk to 3 feet in diameter, with a rounded crown of glossy, green foliage. It is also planted widely as a shade tree suitable for limestone soils.



Range/Site Description: Occurs from northeast Texas to Central Texas and south to the Guadalupe River, and in the mountains of West Texas, growing on mostly limestone soils, especially at the base of bluffs and along stream courses.

Leaf: Simple, alternate, oval to elliptical or oblong in shape, 4" to 6" long and 1.5" to 2" wide, leaf edge rather sharply toothed but without bristle-tips, teeth slightly recurved.

Flower: Separate male and female flowers appear in spring on the same tree. Male flowers borne on a yellowish catkin 3" to 4" long; the female flowers are less conspicuous and reddish.

Fruit: An acorn, requiring just one season to mature, 0.5" to 1.25" long, light to dark brown when ripe, enclosed by one-half its length by the bowl-shaped cup. Acorn is edible if roasted.

Bark: Light gray, breaking into short, narrow flakes on the main trunk and limbs, deeply furrowed on older trunks.

Wood: Heavy, hard, strong, durable, and taking an excellent polish; used for barrels, fencing, crossties, fuel, and occasionally for furniture.

Similar Species: Swamp chestnut oak (*Quercus Michauxii*) occurs in southeast Texas and has larger leaves with rounded teeth.

Interesting Facts: Chinkapin Oak is named because of the resemblance of the leaves to the Allegheny chinquapin (*Castanea Pumila*), a relative of American chestnut (*C. dentata*).