

PAPER-MULBERRY

Broussonetia L'HÉR.

Mulberry Family—Moraceae

Paper-mulberry

Broussonetia papyrifera (L.) Vent.

FORM: broadly spreading deciduous tree to 45 feet with milky sap; spreads by root shoots to form thickets

BARK: light brown to gray, smooth or slightly furrowed

TWIGS: gray-green to gray-brown, hairy with conspicuous orange lenticels

PITH: large, white with a green partition at each node

BUDS: conical, outer bud scale grayish-brown and striped; terminal bud absent

LEAVES: alternate or sometimes nearly opposite on fast-growing branches, simple, variously lobed or unlobed, with toothed margins, softly gray-hairy beneath, rough above; venation palmate

FALL LEAF COLOR: yellow-green

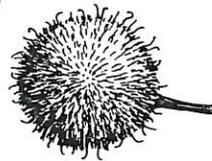
STIPULES: linear, falling early

LEAF SCARS: nearly circular, elevated

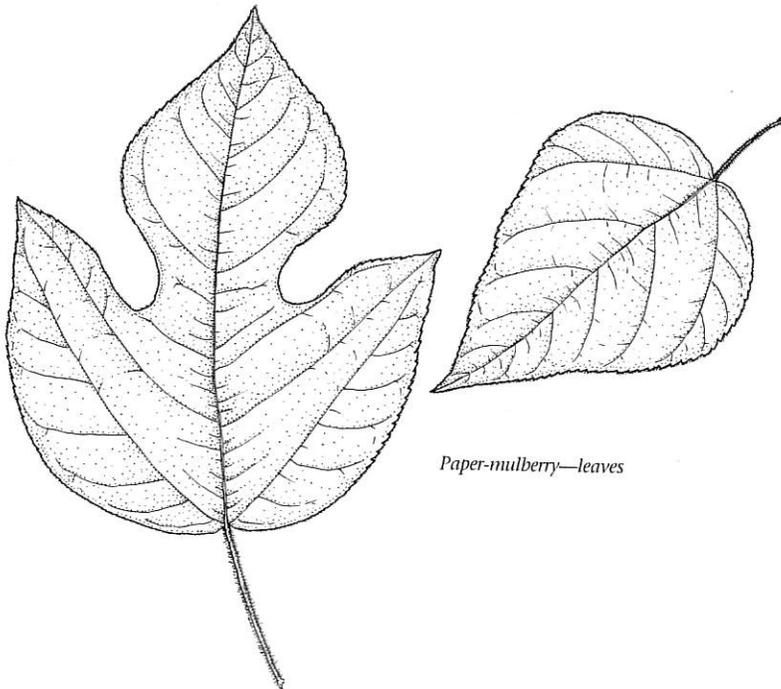
FLOWERS: unisexual, staminate and pistillate on separate plants (dioecious); staminate flowers in drooping catkins, flowers with 4 sepals and 4 stamens; pistillate flowers in dense spherical heads, each flower with 4 fused sepals and a stalked ovary with a long, slender style

FRUIT: spherical, orange-red, about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in diameter, consisting of the fused fruits of an entire inflorescence (a syncarp)

SEEDS: slightly flattened and about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch long



Paper-mulberry—fruit x1



Paper-mulberry—leaves



Paper-mulberry—bark



Paper-mulberry—flowers x1

WOOD: light in color and weight

CURRENT CHAMPION: Philadelphia County, diameter 2 feet 6 inches, height 45 feet, spread 50 feet

Paper-mulberry is often found in urban areas, where it colonizes roadsides, railroad rights-of-way, and vacant lots. Native to China and Japan, it was formerly cultivated as a shade tree and has become widely naturalized in the eastern United States. Weedy tendencies have discouraged its further use as an ornamental.

In Japan paper is made from the fibrous bark, and in Polynesia, the bark is used to make tapa cloth. In the American southwest, Native Americans used the plant as a source of a narcotic substance; in addition the seeds were strung to make ceremonial necklaces.