

black hickory

Carya texana

Kingdom:	Plantae
Division/Phylum:	Magnoliophyta
Class:	Magnoliopsida
Order:	Juglandales
Family:	Juglandaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS

common, native



© Guy Sternberg

tree in late spring

ILLINOIS RANGE



FEATURES

Black hickory is also known as red hickory, Texas hickory or Buckley's hickory. This small, deciduous tree may grow to a height of 25 feet and a trunk diameter of one foot. The trunk is fairly straight. Its brown or black bark lacks shreds or scales, although it becomes ridged at maturity. The gray twigs are slender and smooth. Buds are ovoid, up to one-half inch in length and covered with silvery-golden scales. Leaves are arranged alternately along the stem. These pinnately compound leaves each have five to seven leaflets. The lance-shaped leaflets are pointed at the tip and finely toothed along the edges. Each dark green leaflet may be six inches long. The twig, bud and leaf undersides have rust-colored hairs. Male and female flowers are separate but located on the same tree. Male flowers are clustered in drooping spikes (catkins), while female flowers are found singly or in pairs. The tiny flowers have no petals. The fruits are spherical to egg-shaped nuts. Each nut may be two inches wide. The thin, yellow-green husk splits nearly to the base of the nut.

BEHAVIORS

Black hickory may be commonly found in the southern one-half of Illinois and rarely in the northern one-half of the state. It grows in dry woods and on bluffs. Flowers are produced from April through May after the leaves have begun to unfold. The nut is edible. The heavy, hard, brown wood is used for fuel and fence posts.



leaves and fruit

Aquatic Habitats

none

Woodland Habitats

upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

edge; sand prairie