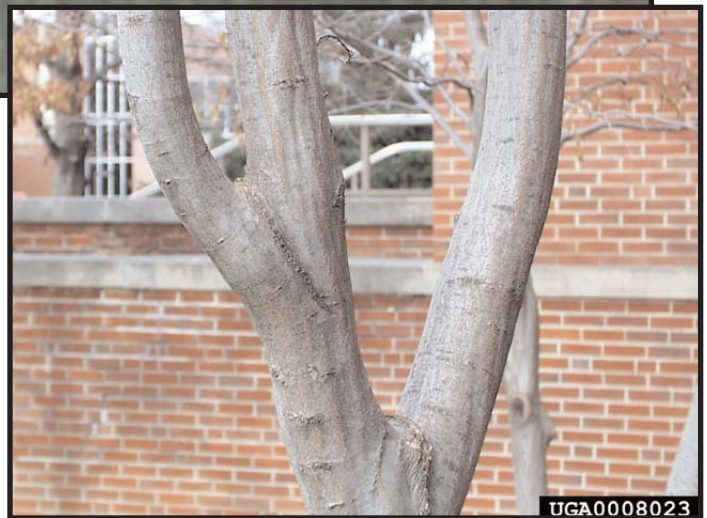


American Hornbeam



GARDEN EARTH
NATURALIST
ECO-SERVICE CARDS

AMERICAN HORNBEAM

Carpinus caroliniana Walt.

FAMILY: Betulaceae

IDENTIFICATION CLUES



SIZE: small tree, up to 35 feet



LEAF: simple with a toothed edge and alternate; deciduous



FLOWER: tiny and occur in catkins which are 1/2 inch (female) to 1 1/2 inch long (male) and green



FRUIT: oval nutlets covered by a leaf-like bract in 3 " long clusters



BARK: gray and smooth; trunk looks "muscular"; this tree is some times referred to as musclewood



Where to Look

American Hornbeam is an understory tree that prefers some shade and is most often found growing along streams and rivers throughout the state.

Importance to Humans

American hornbeam is also called ironwood or musclewood for its extremely hard wood-which is used to make golf clubs and tool handles.

Importance to Wildlife

The fruits or nutlets of american hornbeam are eaten by squirrels, songbirds and gamebirds. Beavers often use this tree to build their homes.