

# Boxelder



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GARDEN EARTH  
NATURALIST  

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ECO-SERVICE CARDS

# BOXELDER

*Acer negundo* L.

FAMILY: Aceraceae

## IDENTIFICATION CLUES



**SIZE:** medium tree, up to 50 feet tall



**LEAF:** compound leaves with 3 - 5 leaflets; leaflets are light green and pointed with a toothed edge



**FLOWER:** small; occur in loose clusters in spring before leaves



**FRUIT:** fruit is a winged seed (samara) about 1 inch long; they occur in pairs that are grouped in small clusters



**BARK:** in young trees, bark of main trunk is gray and smooth with bright green branches; older bark is light brown and ridged



## Where to Look

Boxelder is common in swamps and moist soils along streams and rivers. It is found throughout the state. It prefers open areas but will grow in shade.

## Importance to Humans

Boxelder has little value to humans other than as pulpwood for making paper. It is short-lived and the wood is weak.

## Importance to Wildlife

Boxelder seeds are eaten by birds like cardinals and grosbeaks and other animals.