

Keys to the Hickories (*Carya*) of the Southeastern United States  
 Flora of the Southern and Mid-Atlantic States  
 Working Draft of 30 November 2012  
 by Alan S. Weakley

- 1 Terminal buds elongate, flattened in cross-section, with 4-6 valvate scales; leaves with 7-13 (-19) leaflets, these symmetrical to strongly falcate; fruit sutures narrowly winged.
  - 2 Leaves with 7-9 (-11) leaflets, these symmetrical to slightly falcate; fasciculate trichomes with 2-4 rays; terminal bud, 9-19 mm long, bright orangey yellow to dull orange-tan; [common and widely distributed tree in our area, typically in floodplain and slope forests] ..... *C. cordiformis*
  - 2 Leaves with (7-) 9-19 leaflets, these slightly to strongly falcate; fasciculate trichomes with 2-8 rays; terminal bud { } mm long, brown to rusty-brown.
    - 3 Leaves with (7-) 9-11 (-13) leaflets, the lower surfaces pubescent at least along the midrib and in the main vein axils; bark shaggy; lateral petiolules 0-2 mm long; nut flattened and angled in cross-section; kernel bitter; [native, of swamp forests, primarily in the Coastal Plain].....  
 ..... *C. aquatica*
    - 3 Leaves with (7-) 11-19 leaflets, the lower surfaces nearly glabrous; bark scaly, with small exfoliating plates; lateral petiolules 0-7 mm long; nut round in cross-section; kernel sweet; [introduced, frequently cultivated, long persistent, and occasionally naturalized] ..... *C. illinoensis*
- 1 Terminal buds ovoid, terete in cross-section, with 6-15 imbricate scales; leaves with (3-) 5-9 (-11) leaflets, these symmetrical to slightly falcate; fruit sutures not winged (except *C. myristiciformis*).
  - 4 Bark shaggy (on large trees separating in segments to a meter in length); leaves with (3-) 5 (-7) leaflets; serrations of the leaflets densely (or only moderately) ciliate when young, most densely so just below the tooth apex, the hairs sloughing with age but leaving a subapical tuft of white trichomes on at least some teeth; fallen foliage turning black.
    - 5 Twigs slender, hardened first-year growth or second-year growth 1-3 mm in diameter; terminal bud 6-15 mm long, glabrous to sparsely puberulent (except for ciliate fringe on the scales), reddish-brown (usually turning black on drying); lower surface of leaflets nearly glabrous, except for tufts of trichomes in the main vein axils, and only slightly lepidote with a few, scattered scales, the large peltate scales yellow and round, the small peltate scales brown, 2- and 4-lobed; terminal leaflet 2-5 (-6) cm wide ..... *C. carolinae-septentrionalis*
    - 5 Twigs stout, hardened first-year growth or second-year growth (2.5-) 3-6 mm in diameter; terminal bud 9-18 mm long, tomentose, tan to brown (rarely turning black on drying); lower surface of leaflets moderately to densely hirsute with acicular and fasciculate hairs (sometimes the hairs more or less limited to the main veins), and also moderately lepidote, the large peltate scales yellow and round, the small peltate scales dark brown and mostly round; terminal leaflet (4-) 6-15 cm wide ..... *C. ovata*
  - 4 Bark tight (the ridges typically forming an interlocking diamond pattern), scaly, or shaggy (when shaggy, the separated segments normally much < 1 meter long); leaves with (3-) 5-9 (-11) leaflets; serrations of the leaflets glabrous or ciliate, but lacking subapical tufts of trichomes; fallen foliage not notably blackening.
    - 6 Twigs stout; terminal buds 8-20 mm long; leaves with (5-) 7-9 (-11) leaflets; lower surface of leaflets moderately to densely hirsute with a mixture of acicular (single), fascicled (2-8 rays), and multiradiate (8-many rays) hairs; small peltate scales of the lower surface of leaflets all round; fruit husk 4-13 mm thick; nuts slightly to strongly 4-angled toward the apex.

- 7 Bark shaggy; petiole hirtellous; leaflet apex acuminate; lower surface of leaflets hirsute with acicular (single), 2-6-rayed fascicled, and occasional multiradiate hairs; fruit husk pubescent, lacking pustulate bumps; fruit 4-7 cm long; nut 3-6 cm long; [rare in our area].....*C. laciniosa*
- 7 Bark tight; petiole hirsute; leaflet apex acute; lower surface of leaflets densely hirsute with acicular (single) and abundant 2-8-rayed fascicled and multiradiate hairs; fruit husk glabrous, with pustulate bumps; fruit 3.5-5 cm long; nut 2.5-3.5 cm long; [common in our area] ..... *C. tomentosa*
- 6 Twigs slender; terminal buds 3-15 mm long; leaves with (3-) 5-7 (-9) leaflets; lower surface of leaflets mostly glabrous, except for along the midrib and primary veins, and sometimes hirsute on the surface with acicular (single) and infrequent fascicled (2-8 rays) hairs (lacking multiradiate trichomes); small peltate scales of the lower surface of leaflets of various types, 4-lobed and/or irregular scales often more frequent than round scales; fruit husk 2-5 mm thick; nuts not 4-angled toward the apex.
- 8 Terminal bud 5-15 mm long, predominantly pubescent (also sparsely lepidote); leaves with (3-) 5-7 (-9) leaflets; lower surface of spring leaflets slightly to densely lepidote with irregular and round peltate scales (4-lobed peltate scales uncommon).
- 9 Fruit husk indehiscent at maturity or tardily splitting to base along 1 suture; leaves with (3-) 5 (-7) leaflets, glabrous to pubescent beneath; petiole usually green; fruits ellipsoidal, pyriform, or subglobose; bark tight ..... *C. glabra*
- 9 Fruit husk splitting to base at maturity along 2-4 sutures; leaves with (5-) 7 leaflets, pubescent beneath; petiole reddish; fruits typically ellipsoidal; bark tight or often scaly or somewhat shaggy ..... *C. ovalis*
- 8 Terminal bud 4-10 mm long, predominantly lepidote (also pubescent); leaves with (5-) 7 (-9) leaflets; lower surface of spring leaflets densely lepidote with 4-lobed, irregular, and round peltate scales, giving the undersurface a reflective, silvery-tan, rusty-brown, or bronze sheen.
- 10 Lepidote scales initially silver, soon turning bronze, and giving the buds, young twigs, and undersurface of the leaves a metallic bronze sheen; fruit 2-3 cm long; [of calcareous swamps, bottomlands and slopes of the Coastal Plain of se. NC southward] ..... *C. myristiciformis*
- 10 Lepidote scales silvery-tan or rusty-brown, giving the buds, young twigs, and undersurface of the leaves a dull or slightly shiny tan or rusty-brown color; fruit 3-5 cm long; [usually of upland and acidic forests and woodlands, collectively widespread in our area].
- 11 Undersurface of the leaflets with dense, silvery-tan large peltate scales, and fewer and less conspicuous fewer small peltate scales (thus the leaves appearing overall silvery-tan); petiole and rachis hirsute with fasciculate trichomes, and also with concentrations of hairs near the leaflet insertions; [widespread in our area, of upland and acidic forests and woodlands]..... *C. pallida*
- 11 Undersurface of the leaflets with dense, rusty-brown small peltate scales, and fewer and less conspicuous sivery-tan large peltate scales (thus the leaves appearing overall rusty-brown); petiole and rachis with few fasciculate hairs (but densely scaly), and lacking concentrations of hairs near the leaflet insertions; [of the sc. United States, east to MS, w. KY, w. TN, and perhaps AL and GA, of upland or lowland, acidic or calcareous forests and woodlands] ..... *C. texana*