



Shagbark Hickory • *Carya ovata*



# TREE OF THE MONTH

Shagbark Hickory • *Carya ovata*

ALSO KNOWN AS: UPLAND HICKORY

Shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*) is a large, deciduous tree reaching over 100 feet tall and 50 feet wide. They can live over 300 years. Native to eastern and central North America, shagbarks prefer both uplands and valleys with moist, rich soils. They are not commonly found along the coast south of Delaware. They are the most wide-spread of the hickories, however, and can be found in a variety of habitats.

Shagbark hickory bark matures from a smooth, thin gray to distinctive flat, long, gray-brown plates that curve outward from the tall, straight trunk.

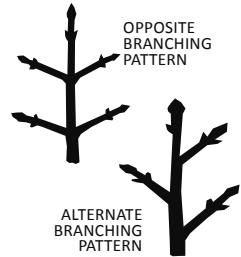
Leaves are compound. Most leaves have 5 leaflets but rarely 7 leaflets can be found. Leaflets have serrated margins with the terminal leaflet typically larger than the others.

Buds are pointed and up to one inch in length with noticeable hair.

Shagbark hickories are monoecious (bearing both male and female flowers on the same plant). Flowers bloom in May and June in northeastern North America, right about when the leaves unfurl.

Shagbark hickory fruits are nuts with thick, woody husks. The fruits are ovate with pointed ends and four raised seams, or sections, that separate when the fruit is ripe.

Fruits serve as food for wild turkeys, bear, squirrels, and other small mammals.



Shagbark hickories have an alternate branching pattern.

Lumber from shagbark hickory wood is hard, strong, and heavy. The lumber, along with wood from pignut hickories, comprises most of the wood marketed as 'hickory.' Used for many purposes, hickory lumber is commonly found in tool handles, ladder rungs, furniture, cabinetry, and veneering.

Tree of the Month is a collaboration between BEAT, the City of Pittsfield, Pittsfield Tree Watch, and the MA Department of Conservation & Recreation's Greening the Gateway Cities Program. Find out more at [thebeatnews.org](http://thebeatnews.org).

