

Water Oak

Quercus nigra

The Beech Family (Fagaceae)

Basic Description: Medium to tall tree with alternate, small, thick, leathery, deciduous leaves variable in shape, but often wedge-shaped; and dark gray, smooth-to-scaly bark.

Interesting Facts: Rapidly growing, short-lived oak that commonly hybridizes with other red oak species. Though deciduous, leaves will remain on the tree well into the winter. Acorns edible after removing tannins and galls used as an astringent. Host to the Horace's Duskywing, White M Hairstreak and the Northern Hairstreak butterflies.

Flower: Male flowers on catkins; Female flowers borne on spikes, both appearing with the leaves.

Fruit: Dark .5" long acorns, 1/3 covered by a flattened, scaled cap; acorns ripen in the fall after two years.

Wildlife Value: Acorns and attracted insects are a valuable food source for mammals and birds. A common nesting tree for birds and squirrels and often a host for parasitic mistletoe.

Habitat: Moist forests, waterways.

LEAF TYPE

SIMPLE



POLLINATOR

WIND



WILDLIFE VALUE

HIGH



Flowers



Fruit



Height range 60 to 100'