

# Horsesugar

## *Symplocos tinctoria*

### The Sweetleaf Family (Symplocaceae)

**Basic Description:** Horsesugar, also known as Sweetleaf, is a multi-trunked shrub to small tree with alternate, evergreen leaves, striped grayish bark and fragrant showy blossoms on bare branches in spring.

**Interesting Facts:** The fresh leaves, with their sweet, “sour apple” flavor, are edible for humans and livestock. The leaves and roots are used to produce a yellow dye. Host plant to the King’s Hairstreak Butterfly. In springtime a fungal gall called *Exobasidium symploci* can form on the newly emerging leaves causing large, fleshy, edible growths.

**Flower:** Male and female flowers are in clusters of small creamy white petals with numerous stamens that appear as fuzzy globes before the new leaves appear.

**Fruit:** Dry drupes, .5” long, egg-shaped, orangish-brown, mature in late summer.

**Wildlife Value:** Leaves and branches are a forage plant for mammals; flowers attract insects; and seeds are a source of food for some bird species.

**Habitat:** Sandy thickets, alluvial woods, stream banks.

#### LEAF TYPE

SIMPLE



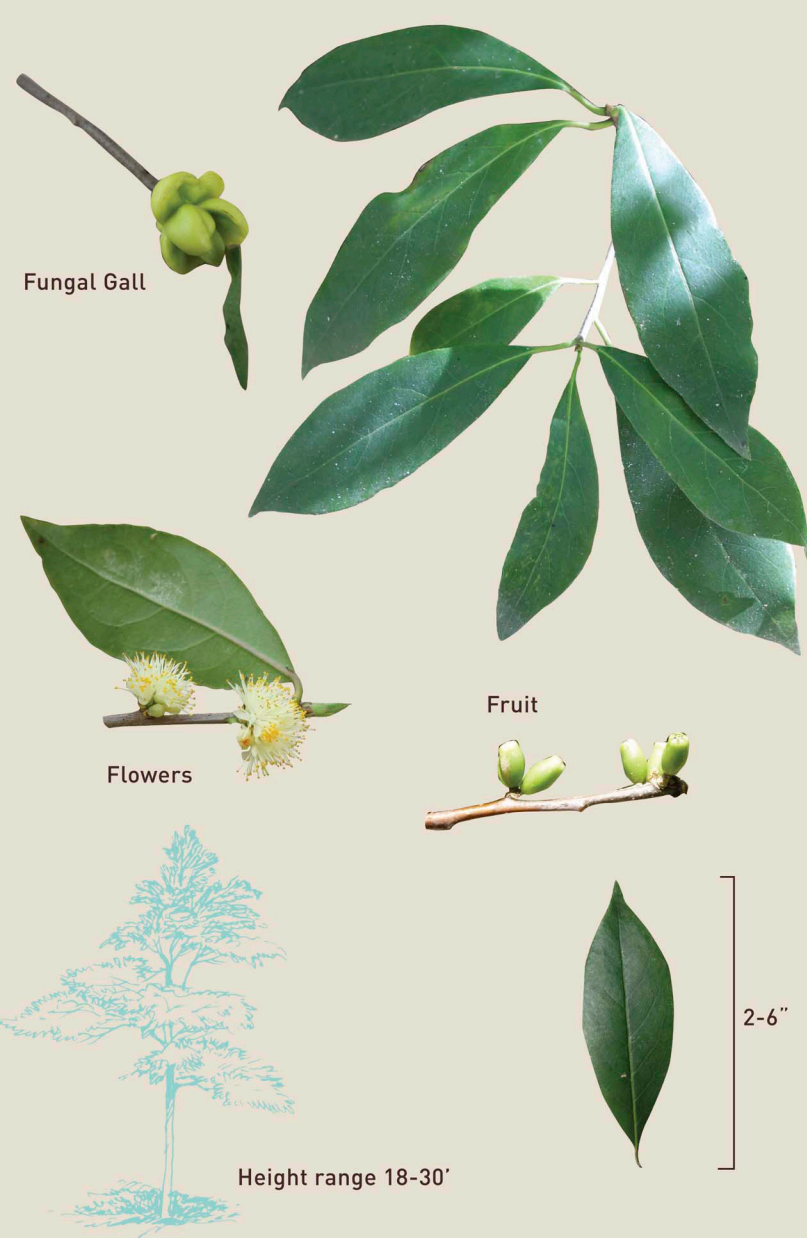
#### POLLINATOR

INSECTS



#### WILDLIFE VALUE

MEDIUM



Fungal Gall

Fruit

Flowers

Height range 18-30'

2-6"