

chinquapin oak *Quercus muhlenbergii*

Kingdom: Plantae

Division/Phylum: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Fagales

Family: Fagaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The chinquapin oak, or yellow chestnut oak, is a deciduous tree that may grow to 100 feet tall with a trunk diameter of four feet. The bark is pale gray with scaly ridges. The simple leaves are arranged alternately on the stem. The leaf is lance-shaped and coarsely toothed around the edges. Each leaf is smooth and yellow-green on the upper surface, paler and hairy on the lower surface, up to eight inches long and five inches wide. Male and female flowers are separate but located on the same tree. The tiny flower does not have petals. Male (staminate) flowers are arranged in catkins, and the female (pistillate) flowers are in small groups. The fruits are acorns that are borne in groups of one or two. Each acorn is ovoid, chestnut-colored and up to three-fourths inch long. The cup covers about one-half of the nut. The cup has hairy scales.

BEHAVIORS

The chinquapin oak may be found in scattered locations throughout Illinois. It grows on low, rich slopes, wooded hillsides and dry cliffs. This tree flowers in April and May. The heavy, strong wood is used for making fence posts, for fuel and for constructing railroad ties.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

© Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 2017. Biodiversity of Illinois.