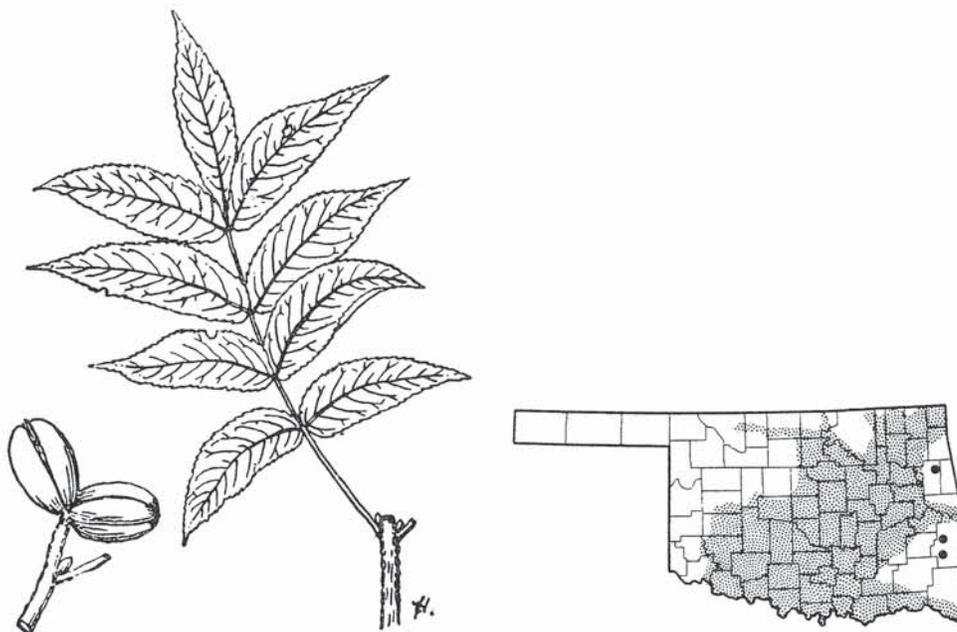


23. PECAN

Carya illinoensis (Wangenh.) K. Koch

Large tree 70 ft (21 m) high and 2½ ft (0.8 m) in diameter, with broad rounded crown of large spreading branches. Twigs stout, gray brown, becoming hairless or nearly so. End bud narrow, with yellowish hairs and paired scales not overlapping.



Leaves pinnately compound, 12-20 in (30-50 cm) long. *Leaflets* 11-17, short-stalked, lance-shaped, 2-7 in (5-18 cm) long, *slightly curved* or sickle-shaped, long-pointed, base rounded or short-pointed and unequal, finely saw-toothed, hairless or nearly so, yellow green above, paler beneath, turning yellow in autumn.

Fruits 3-10 in cluster, *oblong*, 1¼-2 in (3-5 cm) long, short-pointed, rounded at base; husk dark brown, thin, splitting to base along 4 ridges. Nut the familiar *pecan*, light brown with darker markings, thin-shelled, with edible oily seed.

Bark light brown or gray, deeply and irregularly furrowed into narrow forked scaly ridges.

Wood reddish brown with thick light brown sapwood, ring porous to semi-ring porous, even-textured, heavy (sp. gr. .60), hard. Uses include furniture, flooring, novelties, sporting goods, veneer for paneling and plywood containers, and fuelwood and charcoal for smoking meats.

Scattered to common in moist soil of river valleys over Okla. except Ozark Plateau, Ouachita Mts., nw. part, and panhandle. Perhaps introduced along w. edge of range. Common in lower Miss. Valley region n. to nw. Ill. Zone 5.

Pecan ranks among the most important cultivated plants originating in the U.S. and among the most valuable nut crops. Harvests are from wild trees as well as from improved varieties with large thin-shelled nuts grown in plantations or orchards in several se. states. One of the largest hickories, pecan is a fast-growing shade tree. The word pecan is of Algonquian Indian origin. State tree of Texas.