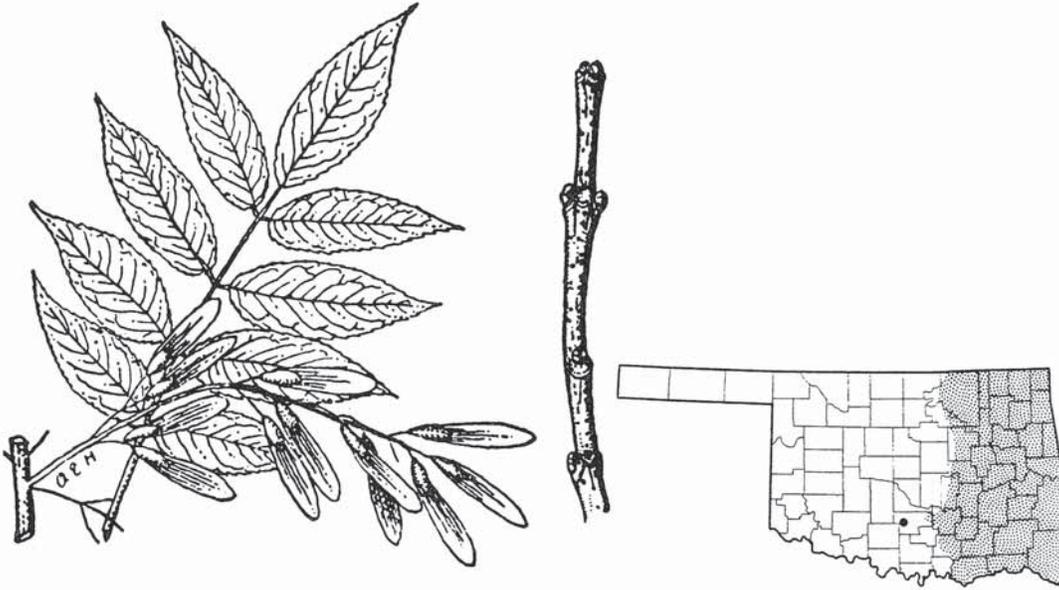


149. WHITE ASH

Fraxinus americana L.

Medium-sized to large tree 60 ft (18 m) high, with straight trunk 1½ ft (0.5 m) in diameter and with conical or rounded dense crown of whitish green foliage. **Twigs** stout, gray or brown, mostly hairless; leaf-scars raised, *crescent-shape* with side bud in notch at tip. **Buds** rounded, dark brown, finely hairy, with 2-4 pairs of scales.



Leaves paired or *opposite*, *pinnately compound*, 8-12 in (20-30 cm) long. Leaflets 5-9, usually 7, paired except at end, short-stalked, *ovate* or *elliptical*, 2½-5 in (6-13 cm) long, 1¼-2½ in (3-6 cm) wide, long-pointed, rounded at base almost without teeth or finely saw-toothed, dark green and hairless above, *beneath whitish* (under a microscope, like tiny white beads) and sometimes hairy, turning purple or yellow in autumn.

Flowers many in small branched clusters on twigs before leaves in early spring, *tiny, purplish*, without corolla, male and female on different trees.

Fruits many keys (samaras) hanging in clusters, reverse lance-shaped, 1-2 in (2.5-5 cm) long, with *narrow wing* blunt or notched at tip and *not extending down cylindrical thick body*, maturing in late summer.

Bark dark gray, thick, with deep diamond-shaped furrows and narrow forking ridges.

Wood gray brown with thick whitish sapwood, ring porous, uneven-textured, heavy (sp. gr. .55), hard, strong, stiff. Principal uses: athletic goods (especially baseball bats), furniture, flooring, millwork, paneling, vehicle parts, handles and handtools, barrels, and boxes and crates. Fuelwood.

Common in moist soil of valleys and uplands in flood plain, white oak, and oak-hickory forests, especially on limestone, e. one-third of Okla. Widespread in e. half of U.S. and adjacent Canada. Zone 3.

White ash is the most important ash native in the United States, also a popular shade tree. The trees are fast growing and form sprouts from stumps. Wood of related species such as green ash and blue ash is marketed together.