

## Eastern/American Sycamore

**Genus/species** *Platanus occidentalis*

**Family:** Platanaceae

**Distribution** **Eastern US** Central Texas eastward to N Florida  
N Florida up the Atlantic Coast to S New Hampshire  
S New Hampshire westward to SW Wisconsin  
and E Nebraska

**Comments** Eastern Sycamore is a common tree in flood plains along rivers but occasionally grows in drier areas in disturbed soil. It is easily recognized by its light-colored bark that comes off in large flakes as the tree matures. The leaves look much like oversized maple leaves but they have a distinct scent and a brownish “fuzz” that is easily rubbed off. Male and female flowers are produced in separate round clusters. The male flower heads produce substantial quantities of wind-borne pollen before falling from the tree, and the female flower heads enlarge to become seed balls over an inch in diameter that eventually disintegrate and scatter the seeds.

