

black oak [Fagaceae](#) [Quercus](#) *velutina* Lam.  symbol: QUVE

vTree

Leaf: Alternate, simple, 4 to 10 inches long, obovate or ovate in shape with 5 (mostly) to 7 bristle-tipped lobes; leaf shape is variable, with sun leaves having deep sinuses and shade leaves having very shallow sinuses, lustrous shiny green above, paler with a scruffy pubescence and axillary tufts below.

Flower: Species is monoecious; males borne on slender yellow-green catkins; females are reddish green and borne on short spikes in leaf axils, appearing in spring with the leaves.

Fruit: Ovoid acorns, 1/2 to 3/4 inch long, 1/3 to 1/2 enclosed in a bowl-shaped cap; cap scales are loosely appressed (particularly loose on edges of cap), light brown and fuzzy, matures in 2 years in late summer and fall.

Twig: Stout and red-brown to gray-green, usually glabrous but rapidly growing twigs may be hairy; buds are very large (1/4 to 1/2 inch long), buff-colored, fuzzy, pointed and distinctly angular.

Bark: At first gray and smooth, becoming thick and very rough, nearly black and deeply furrowed vertically with horizontal breaks. The inner bark is yellow-orange and very bitter tasting.

Form: A medium sized tree to 80 feet with an irregular crown and a tapering, somewhat limby bole.

Looks like: [northern red oak](#) - [scarlet oak](#) - [Shumard oak](#) - [cherrybark oak](#)



Additional Range Information:
Quercus velutina is native to North America. Range may be expanded by planting. [See states reporting black oak.](#)

External Links:
[USDAFS Silvics of North America](#)
[USDAFS Additional Silvics](#)
[Landowner Factsheet](#)
[USDA Plants Database](#)

© Copyright 2012, Virginia Tech Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation, all rights reserved.
Photos and Text by: John Seiler, Edward Jensen, Alex Niemiera, and John Peterson.