

## Sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*)

15-25' x 6-12' tree. Narrow pyramidal outline, rounded top. Spreading tiered branches droop gracefully.

Native from PA south, in acidic pine and hardwood forests, and fence-rows.

In July covered with showy fragrant creamy-white urn-shaped flowers in soft-looking 10"-long drooping clusters, at stem ends.

4-6" canoe-shaped lustrous leaves, dark and shiny on top, gray-green on bottom.

One of the very best for fall color. Brilliant scarlets, burgundies, oranges, often all on the same tree, into late fall.

Long cream-colored tassels of fruit capsules, a pretty contrast to fall foliage. Persist into winter.

Youngest twigs olive, turn red. Brown bark deeply furrowed, red-orange inner bark.

Sun to light shade, best color in sun. Moist to moderately dry, well-drained, loose acid soil. Shallow root system. Likes annual layer of rotted bark or leaves

Outstanding 4-season interest. Use as exceptional small single specimen, in groups, yards, at foundations, wood's edge.

A favorite of bees- sourwood honey is a southern specialty. Supports 14 species of butterflies, including Silver-spotted Skipper.

Photo 1: Will Cook, Duke University  
[www.duke.edu/~cwcook/trees/oxar.html](http://www.duke.edu/~cwcook/trees/oxar.html)  
Photos 2, 4, 5, 7

North Central Conservation District  
Photo 3: Steve Baskauf  
[bioimages.vanderbilt.edu](http://bioimages.vanderbilt.edu)

Photos 7, 8, 9: VA Tech Dept. of Forestry  
Biology and Dendrology  
John R. Seiler and John A. Peterson  
[dendro.cnre.vt.edu/dendrology/syllabus/factsheet.cfm?ID=61](http://dendro.cnre.vt.edu/dendrology/syllabus/factsheet.cfm?ID=61)

