

## BLUE ASH

### *Fraxinus quadrangulata* Michx.

OTHER COMMON NAMES: Mountain ash, White ash.

FORM: Usually 60-70 feet high, occasionally 120 feet with a trunk 2-3 feet in diameter, small spreading branches forming a slender head.

BARK: 1/2-2/3 inch thick, irregularly divided into plate-like scales, light gray surface slightly tinged with red separating into thin minute scales.

TWIGS: At first 4-angled, more or less 4-winged at the nodes, dark orange color, covered with short reddish-brown pubescence, in the third year light brown or ashy-gray and then becoming almost round.

LEAVES: Opposite, 8-12 inches long, compound with 5-11 oblong-ovate to lanceolate long-pointed coarsely serrate leaflets, rounded or cuneate at the base, at maturity thick and firm, yellow-green and glabrous above, pale below, 3-5 inches long, 1-2 inches wide.

FLOWERS: Perfect, appearing as the terminal buds begin to expand in loose-branched panicles, corolla lacking, stamens 2, ovary gradually narrows into a short style with two purple stigmatic lobes.

FRUIT: Oblong to oblong-cuneate, 1-2 inches long, 1/3-1/2 inch wide, the wing rounded, emarginate or acute at the apex, surrounding the flat seed.

WINTER BUDS: Terminal 1/4 inch long, reddish-brown, slightly puberulous or hoary-tomentose.

WOOD: Heavy, hard, close-grained, rather brittle, light yellow streaked with brown; thick, light colored sapwood of 80-90 annual rings.

USES: Pulp, lumber, similar to white ash. Historical *uses*: Flooring, carriage building, dye.

HABITAT: Rich lime-stone hills, occasionally in fertile valleys.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: The young twigs are quadrangular; the wing surrounds the seed; flowers without a calyx; mainly on rich limestone hills.

DISTRIBUTION JN ALABAMA: Reported from Jackson and Madison Counties.

#### EXPLANATION OF PLATE

- |                              |                                |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. A flowering branch        | 6. Vertical section of a fruit |
| 2. A flower                  | 7. A seed                      |
| 3. A stamen                  | 8. An embryo                   |
| 4. A pistil cut transversely | 9. A winter branchlet          |
| 5. A fruiting branch         |                                |



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