

CHESTNUT OAK

Quercus prinus Engelm.

OTHER COMMON NAMES: Rock oak, Rock chestnut oak, White oak.

FORM: Usually 60-70 feet high, occasionally 100 feet, diameter of trunk 3-4 feet, rarely 6-7 feet, bole generally divided 15-20 feet above ground into large limbs spreading into a broad open rather irregular head.

BARK: 3/4-1 1/2 inch thick, dark reddish-brown almost black, divided into broad rounded ridges covered with closely appressed scales.

TWIGS: At first green, tinged with purple or bronze color, glabrous or pilose, later light orange color or reddish-brown, ultimately dark gray or brown.

LEAVES: Alternate, simple, obovate or oblong to lanceolate, acute or acuminate or rounded at apex, cuneate or rounded or subcordate at the narrow entire base, irregularly and coarsely crenulate-toothed, with rounded, acute or sometimes nearly triangular oblique teeth, yellow-green on the upper surface; lower paler and finely pubescent, 4 1/2 -9 inches long, 1 1/2-3 inches wide.

FLOWERS: Monoecious; staminate in elongated hirsute aments, calyx yellow; pistillate in short spikes on stout puberulous dark green peduncles, stigmas dark red.

FRUIT: Matures the first season; nut ovoid or ellipsoidal, rounded, rather obtuse or pointed at apex, bright chestnut-brown, very lustrous, 1-1 1/2 inch long, 5/8-1 inch thick, about half of its length enclosed, sometimes only at the base, in a turbinate or cup-shaped thin cup.

WINTER BUDS: Ovoid, acute or acuminate, 1/4-1/2 inch long, with bright chestnut-brown scales ciliate on their margins.

WOOD: Heavy, hard, strong, tough, close-grained, durable in the soil.

USES: Rough lumber, pulp, railroad ties, firewood. Historical uses: fencing, tannin.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: Irregularly and coarsely crenulate-toothed leaves; bark divided into broad, rounded ridges; large buds with scales ciliate on their margins; large acorns.

DISTRIBUTION IN ALABAMA: Mainly north and east of a line extending through the southeast corner of Randolph, northwest corner of Chambers, northern part of and Autauga, through Perry, Hale, Tuscaloosa, and Fayette Counties.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. A fruiting branch | 4. A seed |
| 2. A cup | 5. Part of the base of a cup |
| 3. Vertical section of a nut | 6. A winter branchlet |



Quercus prinus Engelm.