

EASTERN REDBUD

Cercis canadensis L.

OTHER COMMON NAMES: Judas-tree

FORM: A small tree, up to 40 feet in height with a trunk of up to 12" in diameter, branching 10-15 feet above the ground to form a narrow, erect or spreading, flattened or rounded crown.

LEAVES: Alternate, deciduous, simple; 3-5" in diameter; heart-shaped; apex is a broad, sharp point; base is cordate or flattened; margin, entire; dull green above, paler and somewhat hairy beneath; petiole, slender, 2-5" long, swollen at base.

BARK: Smooth, dark gray or brown; becoming darker and furrowed into scaly plates with age.

TWIGS: Slender and brown with a definite zigzag shape.

WINTER BUDS: Terminal buds are absent; lateral buds are small, blunt, red; accessory buds (mostly for blossoms) are common.

FLOWERS: Perfect, irregular, lavender blossoms appear in early spring before the leaves in clusters of 4 to 8; 1/2" long on 1/2" long stalks; often found on the trunks as well as the branches of trees.

FRUIT: Flat, narrowly oblong pods; 2-3 & 1/2" long; pointed at ends; pink, turning blackish; mature and fall in late autumn or through the winter; pods split open on one side releasing seeds.

HABITAT: Moist, soils of valleys and slopes; often in open, mixed hardwood stands; can form thickets after timber harvests.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: The showy blossoms are a harbinger of spring; the leaves are attractive in summer and fall.

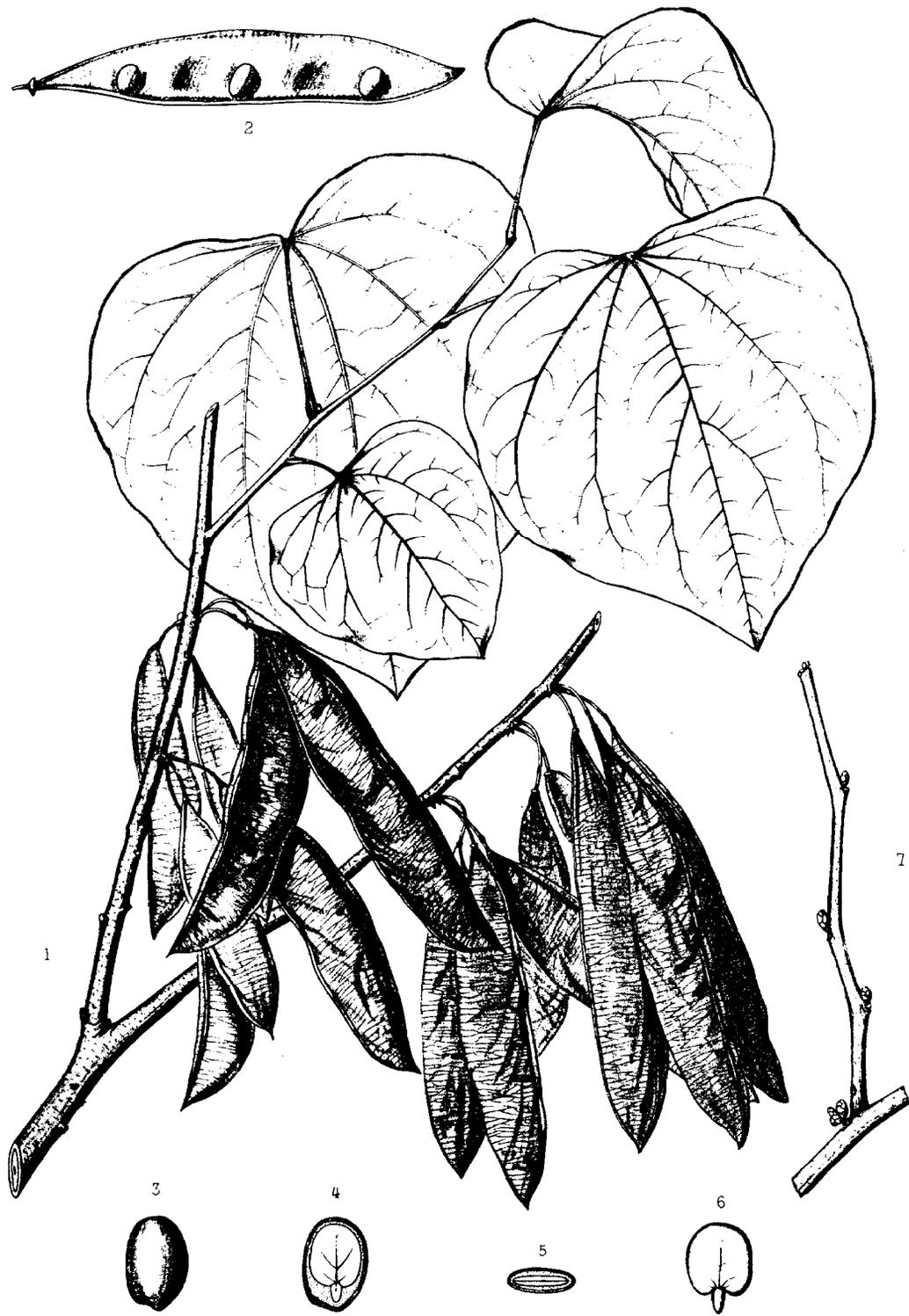
WOOD: Qualities are unknown; not a commercial timber species.

USES: A valuable ornamental, landscaping species.

DISTRIBUTION IN ALABAMA: Statewide except lower coastal plain.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE

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| 1. A fruiting branch | 5. X-section of a seed |
| 2. A legume | 6. An embryo |
| 3. A seed | 7. A winter branchlet |
| 4. Vertical section of a seed | |



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