

# LIVE OAK

## *Quercus virginiana* Mill.

OTHER COMMON NAMES: Virginia live oak.

FORM: Often 40-50 feet high, trunk 3-4 feet in diameter, usually divides a few feet above the ground into 3-4 horizontal spreading limbs, forming a low dense round-topped head sometimes 130 feet across; occasionally 60-70 feet tall, trunk diameter of 6-7 feet.

BARK: 1/2-1 inch thick, dark brown tinged with red, slightly furrowed, separating on the surface into small, closely appressed scales.

TWIGS: Become ashy-gray or light brown and pubescent or puberulous by the first winter, ultimately darker and glabrous.

LEAVES: Oblong elliptic or obovate, rounded or acute at apex, gradually narrowed and cuneate or rarely rounded or cordate at base, usually entire with slightly revolute margins or rarely spinose-dentate above the middle, dark green and lustrous above, lower surface pale and pubescent, 2-5 inches long, 1/2-2 1/2 inches wide.

FLOWERS: Monoecious; staminate in hairy aments, calyx light yellow, divided into 5-7 segments, anthers hirsute; pistillate in spikes on slender peduncles 1-3 inches long, stigmas bright red.

FRUIT: Usually in 3-5 fruited spikes, rarely in pairs or single; nut ellipsoidal or slightly obovoid, narrowed at base, rounded or acute at apex, dark chestnut-brown, lustrous, 1 inch long, 1/2 inch wide, about 1/4 of its length enclosed in a turbinate cup.

WINTER BUDS: Globose or slightly obovoid, about 1/6 inch long with thin light chestnut-brown scales, white and scarious on margins.

WOOD: Very heavy, hard, strong, tough, close-grained, light brown or yellow, with thin, nearly white sapwood.

USES: Landscaping, pulp, firewood. Historical uses: Shipbuilding.

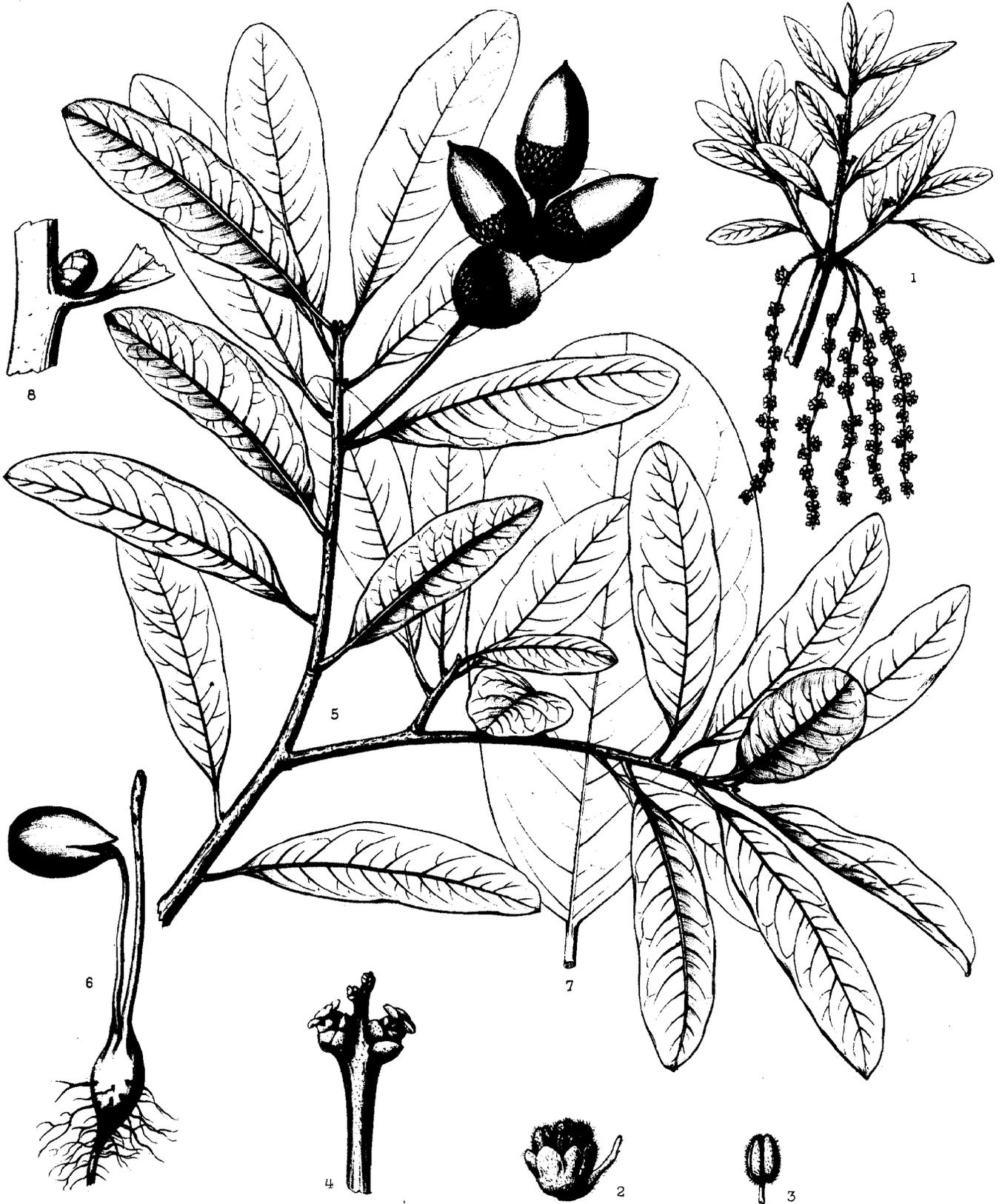
HABITAT: Moist, deep soils often mixed with water oaks.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: Leaves yellow-green, persist until new leaves appear; acorns long-stalked; bark on trunk slightly furrowed, separating on surface into small scales.

DISTRIBUTION IN ALABAMA: Reported from Mobile, Baldwin, and Covington Counties.

### EXPLANATION OF PLATE

- |                               |                      |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. A flowering branch         | 5. A fruiting branch |
| 2. A staminate flower         | 6. A germinating nut |
| 3. A stamen                   | 7. A leaf            |
| 4. A pistillate inflorescence | 8. A winter bud      |



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