

# SCARLET OAK

## *Quercus coccinea* Muenchh.

OTHER COMMON NAMES: Black oak, Red oak, Spanish oak, Spotted oak.

FORM: Medium sized tree 60-80 feet high, occasionally 150 feet tall, with diameter of 4 feet; lateral branches ascending above, horizontal in the middle, drooping below, lower ones die readily from shading; crown in the open, narrow, irregular, rounded or oblong.

BARK: Smooth on young stems and branches, light brown on old trunks; 1/2-1 inch thick, divided by shallow fissures into irregular ridges covered by small light brown scales tinged with red.

TWIGS: Slender, smooth, lustrous, light reddish-brown or grayish-brown, covered with pale lenticels, finally dark brown.

LEAVES: Alternate, simple, broadly obovate to oval, 3-6 inches long, 2 1/2-4 inches wide, truncate or cuneate at the base, 7-9 lobed; lobes repandly dentate, bristle-tipped at apex, separated by deep wide sinuses which extend over half way to the midrib; glabrous, dark green above, paler below.

FLOWERS: Appear when leaves are about one-half grown; monoecious; staminate in interrupted, pendulous hairy aments 3-4 inches long, borne on the growth of the preceding season or from the axils of the inner scales of the terminal bud; pistillate flowers in groups of 2-3, or solitary, borne on short stalks in the axils of the leaves of the season.

FRUIT: An acorn, borne solitary or in pairs, ripens the second season; nut ovoid, pale reddish-brown, often striated, round-pointed at apex 1/2-1 inch long, 1/3-1/2 of its length enclosed in the cup; cup turbinate, thin, pale, reddish-brown.

WINTER BUDS: Alternate; those near the tip clustered about the terminal bud; broadly ovate, acute, dark reddish-brown, somewhat pubescent.

WOOD: With prominent medullary rays, strong, heavy, coarse in texture.

USES: Lumber, interior woodwork, furniture, landscaping.

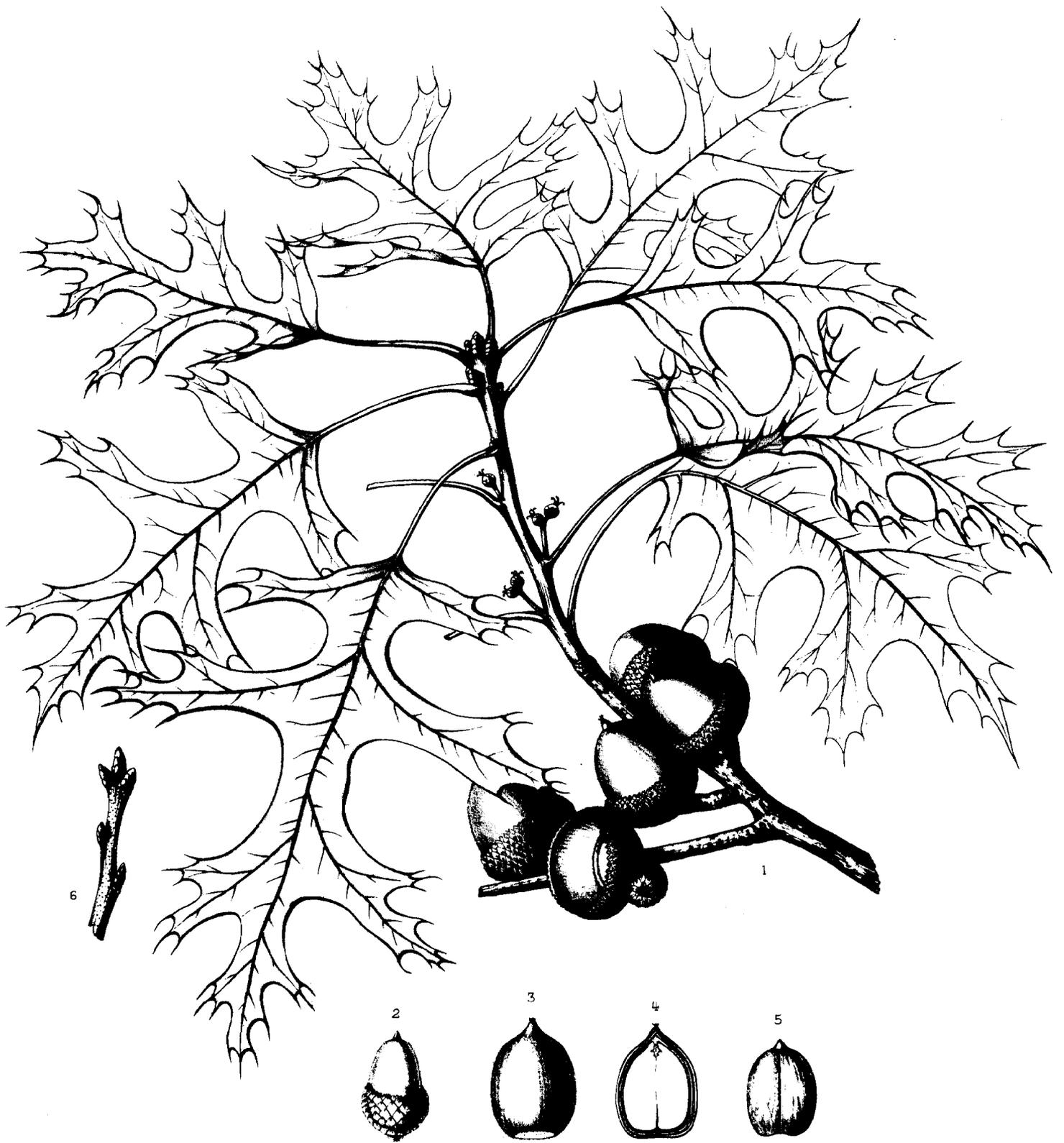
HABITAT: Prefers light sandy or gravelly soils.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: Deep round-based sinuses of its leaves; buds pubescent from the middle to the apex; turbinate, deep cup-shaped acorns; brilliant scarlet color of its foliage in autumn.

DISTRIBUTION IN ALABAMA: Commonest in the northern part of the state, occurs as far south as Covington, Coffee, and Dale Counties.

### EXPLANATION OF PLATE

- |                               |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. A fruiting branch          | 4. Vertical section of a nut |
| 2. A fruit (from Minnesota)   | 5. A seed                    |
| 3. A NUT (from Massachusetts) | 6. A winter branchlet        |



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