

SWEETBAY

Magnolia virginiana L.

OTHER COMMON NAMES: Sweetbay magnolia, Swampbay, Laurel magnolia, Swamp magnolia.

FORM: Slender tree, 20-30 feet high, not more than 15-18 inches in diameter, with small, mostly erect, ultimately spreading branches.

BARK: 3/8-1/2 inch thick, light brown, covered with thin appressed scales, smooth on young trunks.

TWIGS: At first bright green, hoary-pubescent; soon glabrous, become bright red the second year.

LEAVES: Alternate, simple, oblong or elliptic and obtuse or oblong-lanceolate, upper surface bright green, glabrous, pale or nearly white on lower surface, in the north, the leaves fall in November and early winter, in the South they remain on the branches until spring, 4-6 inches long, 1 1/2-3 inches wide.

FLOWERS: Flowers perfect, on glabrous pedicels 1/2-3/4 inch long, creamy-white, fragrant, globular, 2-3 inches across.

FRUIT: Ellipsoidal, dark red, glabrous, 2 inches long, 1/2 inch thick; seeds obovoid, oval or suborbicular, flat, 1/4 inch long.

WINTER BUDS: Finely silky pubescent; terminal bud 1/2-3/4 inch long.

WOOD: Soft, light brown tinged with red, creamy-white sapwood, 90-100 layers of annual growth.

USES: Pulp, lumber, plywood veneer. Historical uses: broom handles, woodenware, furniture.

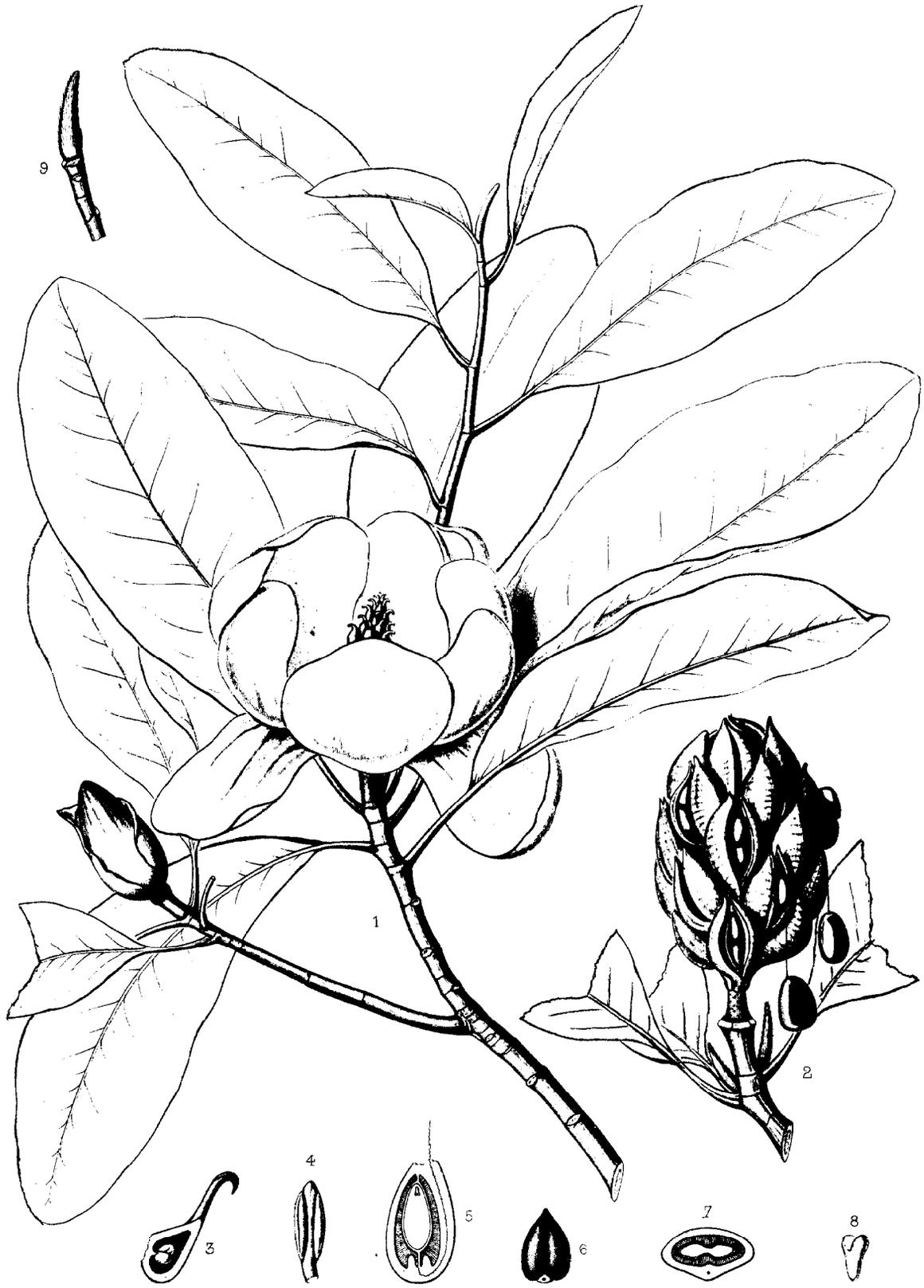
HABITAT: Borders of pine-barren swamps, shallow swamps and on rich hummocks.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: Leaves semipersistent and scattered along the branches; shape and size of the leaves; creamy-white fragrant flowers.

DISTRIBUTION IN ALABAMA: Quite general over the state.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE

1. A flowering branch
2. A fruit
3. Vertical section of a
4. A stamen
5. Vertical section of a seed
6. A seed, the fleshy part of the testa removed, showing the grooved stony portion
7. Cross section of a seed
8. An embryo
9. A winter bud



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