

Chestnut Oak

Quercus prinus

Mountain Oak, Rock Oak

Chestnut Oak, so named because of its chestnut-like leaves, is a deciduous, native tree reaching 60 feet in the open with an equal spread. It is capable of reaching 100 feet in the forest. The glossy, green four to eight inch long leaves turn yellow-brown in fall. The large acorns are particularly sweet tasting and are relished by many forms of wildlife. The attractive dark brown bark is deeply ridged and furrowed. A member of the white oak family, its wood is similar- heavy, hard, strong, and durable. It has some rot resistance as well. It is naturally found on poor, dry, sandy, or rocky landscapes and it well adapted for relatively challenging sites though it will not tolerate wet or poorly drained sites. Occasionally a long lived tree, such as the Washington tree in NY that is more than 1000 years old. More commonly Chestnut Oaks survive to 400 years.



Identification

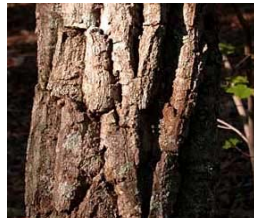
Leaves

Deciduous, simple, alternate, oblong, irregularly scalloped or wavy on the margin, but not sharp toothed. Green above and paler below. 4-7 inches.



Bark/Wood

Dark brown bark, deeply ridged and furrowed. Wood is similar to other white oaks, light colored, heavy, hard, strong, and coarse grained.



Flower/Fruit

Monoecious; brown and not showy, spring blooming, inconspicuous. The acorn is longer than it is wide, cup thin, and ripens in one season.



Form

Symmetrical rounded canopy in the open, taller and narrower with competition.



Uses

Chestnut Oak has been used extensively along streets and as a shade tree. Wood is hardest of all the oaks and once used for railroad ties.

Ethnobotany

Native Americans included Chestnut Oak acorns in their diet.

Native Distribution

Mississippi Drainage east through Ohio River Valley and to New England.

Establishment

Seed germinates readily. Care should be taken to not overwater.

Growing Conditions and Culture

Mature Size 100'Hx60'Wx4'dbh
 USDA Zone 5-9
 Light Requirements Full Sun

Soils Diverse, Not Heavy
 Drought Tolerant? Yes
 Inundation Tolerant? No

Pests/Damaging Agents

Susceptible to oak wilt. Gypsy moths infest the tree though rarely fatally. Many other potential problems although none usually serious.

Similar Species

Swamp Chestnut Oak
 Swamp Chestnut Oak is a closely related species. It grows taller, with platey, light gray bark.

Propagation

Seeds - immediately viable.

Source(s)

Seed collected at the Cornell Plantation, NY.