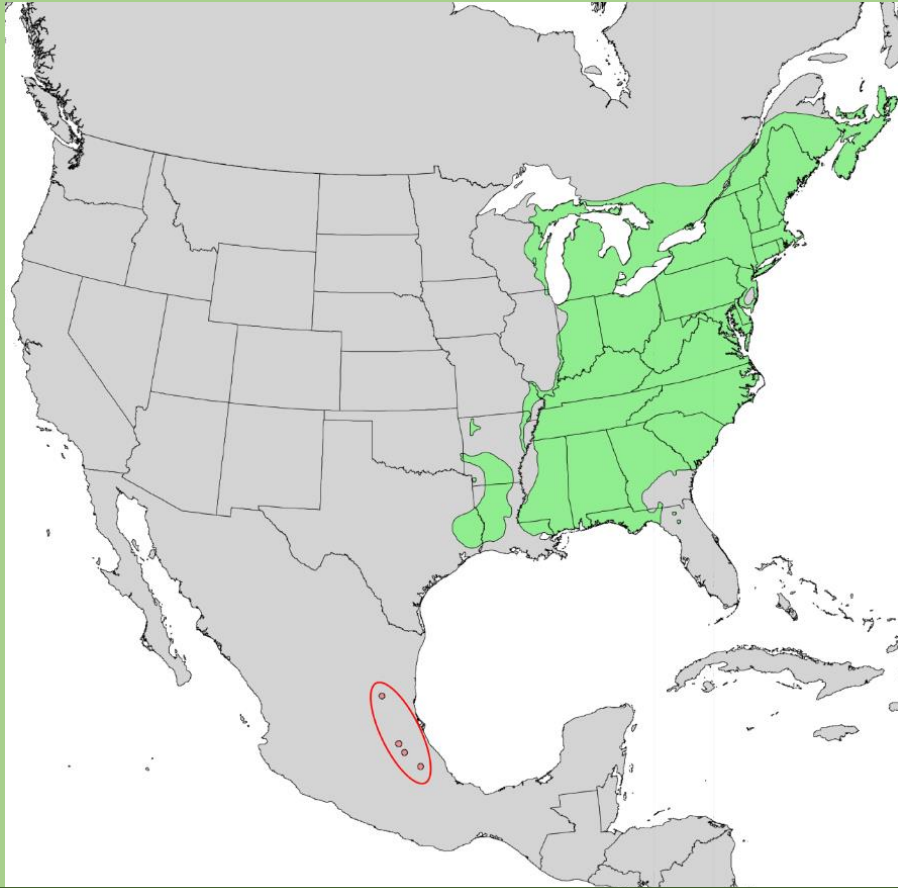


American Beech

Fagus grandifolia



The American beech is a large deciduous hardwood native to the eastern US and Southern Canada, with a potential subspecies living in parts of Mexico. Growing upwards of 50-70 feet or more, it is a main component of many hardwood forests—with a lifespan up to 300 years. Its leaves have alternate arrangement and are elliptical with pointed tips and coarse teeth. They grow green in the summer, turn yellow or brown in the fall, and often stay attached to the trees during the winter, turning a pale brown color. The tree flowers in the spring for about one week and the fruits form in prickly husk—ripening in the fall with 2 or 3 beechnuts inside. The tree serves important roles for wildlife, including shelter and food. Populations have unfortunately suffered from beech bark disease over the past 130 years, which is caused by invading fungi after beech scale insects open the bark.