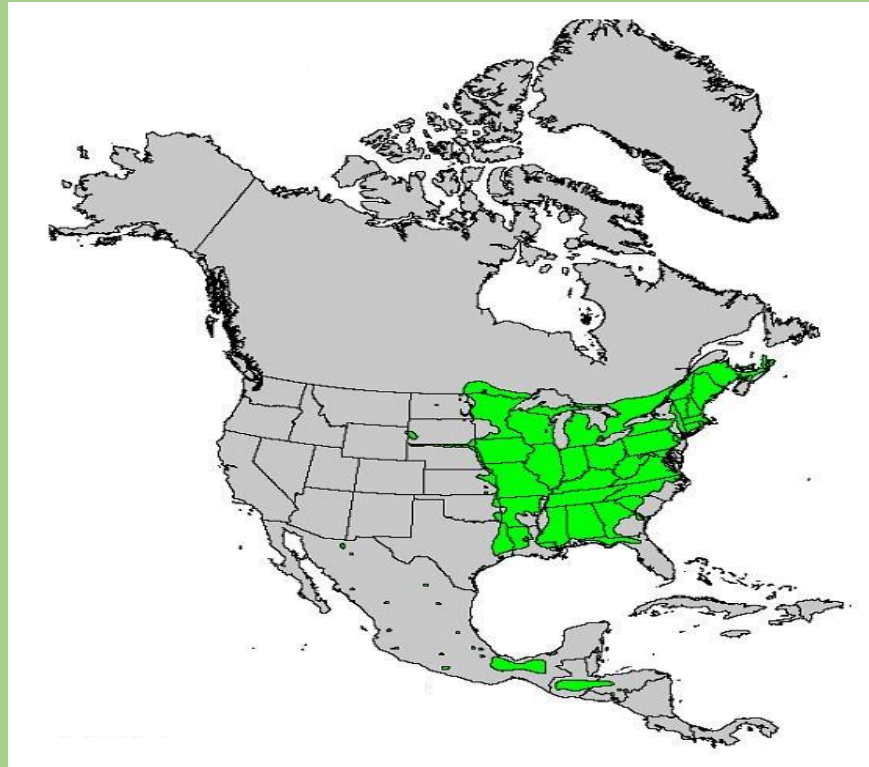


American Hop-Hornbeam

Ostrya virginiana



The American hop-hornbeam is a small to medium deciduous hardwood widespread across the eastern half of the US and southeastern Canada, with scattered populations in Mexico and Central America. A short-lived tree, it can grow between 25 and 40 feet, albeit at a slow rate of 10-15 feet over 15 years. The dark green leaves have an alternate arrangement and turn red-orange or yellow in the fall. It is monoecious, which means male and female flowers occur separately on the same tree and come in the form of single sex catkins. The tree gets its name from the female catkins, whose color and shape closely resemble the hops used for brewing beer. The size and short lifespan limit its importance commercially, but its sturdy wood makes it good for local uses, such as toolmaking. The nuts and buds too provide food for wildlife.