

Friends of the Arboretum Native Plant Sale



## ***Ostrya virginiana* - Ironwood**

COMMON NAME: Ironwood, Hop hornbeam

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Ostrya virginiana* *Ostrya* is Greek for a tree with very hard wood.

FLOWER: Greenish-yellow catkins

BLOOMING PERIOD: Mid to late April

SIZE: small tree growing to a height of 25-30 feet, occurring as an understory tree.

BEHAVIOR: Slow growing. Older trees tend to sucker. In grazed woodlots hop hornbeam (ironwood) may become the dominant understory tree because cattle do not eat it. Branching is upright and spreading with older trees becoming rounded.

SITE REQUIREMENTS: Occurs naturally on average soil that is moist and cool. Tolerates some shade and drier, somewhat disturbed sites. Does best in full sun to partial shade.

NATURAL RANGE: New England and southern Canada west to Minnesota, Nebraska, Texas and Florida.

SPECIAL FEATURES: Tolerates some shade. Noted for the delicate tracery of twigs and branches against the winter sky, retains its leaves and has an interesting, fine-textured bark. These more than compensate for a lack of showy flowers or fall color.

SUGGESTED CARE: Patience! This tree is slow to get established (water well and protect from rabbits) but very tolerant once established.

COMPANION PLANTS: Sugar maple, shagbark hickory, white ash, choke and black cherry, red and white oak, basswood. Also spring beauty, wild geranium, sweet cicely, mayapple, Solomon's plume, large flowered bellwort.