

## OLEACEAE – OLIVE FAMILY

**Plant:** woody vines, shrubs and trees

**Stem:**

**Root:**

**Leaves:** mostly deciduous, some evergreen; simple or pinnately compound, opposite or rarely alternate; no stipules or rare

**Flowers:** mostly perfect or some imperfect (monoecious), regular (actinomorphic); small to showy and often in clusters; usually 4 sepals, reduced or none; usually 4 petals in tube that is lobed, or reduced or none; 2-4 stamens; ovary superior, 2 carpels, 1 style

**Fruit:** berry, capsule, drupe or winged seed capsule; often oily

**Other:** very widespread in Asia; Dicotyledons Group

**Genera:** 25+ genera; locally *Chionanthus*, *Forestiera*, *Forsythia*, *Fraxinus* (ash), *Ligustrum* (privet), *Osmanthus*, *Syringa* (lilac)

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White Fringe Tree [Old Man's Beard]; *Chionanthus virginicus* L.  
Eastern Swamp Privet; *Forestiera acuminata* (Michx.) Poir.  
Weeping Forsythia; *Forsythia suspensa* (Thunb.) Vahl (Introduced)  
Greenstem Forsythia; *Forsythia viridissima* Lindl. (Introduced)  
White Ash; *Fraxinus americana* L.  
Blue Ash; *Fraxinus quadrangulata* Michx.  
Green [Red] Ash; *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* Marsh.  
Privet; *Ligustrum vulgare* L. (Introduced)  
[Common] Lilac; *Syringa vulgaris* L. (Introduced)

# White Fringe Tree [Old Man's Beard]

*Chionanthus virginicus* L.  
Oleaceae (Olive Family)

R.S. Kerr Nature and Botanical Area,  
Le Flore County, Oklahoma

Notes: shrub to small tree; dioecious, flowers of 4-6 long white petals, narrow and pointed, in clusters; leaves opposite, entire, fairly large, sometimes with wavy edge, ovate, smooth above but paler and hairy on veins beneath; fruit a purple glaucous drupe; twigs stout; buds small; bark smooth to slightly ridged; spring

[V Max Brown, 2012]



# Eastern Swamp Privet

*Forestiera acuminata* (Michx.) Poir.

Oleaceae (Olive Family)

Batesville, Independence County, Arkansas

Notes: shrub to small tree; dioecious, small flowers lack petals, bracts yellow, flowering before leaves; leaves opposite, entire, with fine teeth toward sharp tip; fruit a drupe or capsule, red to purple, sometimes elongated with sharp tip; twigs slender, glabrous to finely hairy; buds blunt; bark smooth to slightly ridged; spring

[V Max Brown, 2010]



# Weeping Forsythia

*Forsythia suspensa* (Thunb.) Vahl  
(Introduced)

Oleaceae (Olive Family)

Oak Openings Metropark, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: shrub; 4-petaled (deeply lobed) and showy flower, yellow; leaves opposite, two types (simple and lobed), serrate; branches pendulous, stems hollow between nodes, many lenticels; spring (hybrids common)

[V Max Brown, 2008]



# Greenstem Forsythia

*Forsythia viridissima* Lindl.

(Introduced)

Oleaceae (Olive Family)

Oak Openings Metropark, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: shrub; 4-petaled (deeply lobed) and showy flower, yellow; leaves opposite, simple (one kind), serrate; branches pendulous, stems chambered, many lenticels; spring (hybrids common)

[V Max Brown, 2008]



# White Ash

*Fraxinus americana* L.

Oleaceae (Olive Family)

Oak Openings Metropark, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: tree; flowers greenish, in clusters, small, dioecious; leaves pinnate, 5-9 leaflets, ovate to lanceolate, well stalked, with or without teeth, pale or white beneath; twigs round, mostly glabrous, may be hairy in some varieties; bark dark and furrowed (diamond pattern); fruit not winged to base, seed bulges out from wing; winter buds brown, upper margin of leaf scar concave; spring (several varieties)

[V Max Brown, 2005]



# Blue Ash

*Fraxinus quadrangulata* Michx.

Oleaceae (Olive Family)

Maumee River Metroparks, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: trees; flowers small, perfect or monoecious, often purplish; leaves pinnate, 5-11 but often 7 leaflets, very short petiole except terminal leaflet, mostly glabrous except veins beneath, ovate to somewhat lanceolate, toothed; branchlets 4-angled, often slightly winged; bark gray and scaly; fruit a samara, winged to base and notched at tip; winter buds finely pubescent, grayish to brownish; spring

[V Max Brown, 2008]



# Green [Red] Ash

*Fraxinus pennsylvanica* Marsh.

Oleaceae (Olive Family)

Oak Openings Metropark, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: tree; flowers greenish, in clusters, small, dioecious; leaves pinnate, 5-9 (usually 7) leaflets, lanceolate, stalked, with rounded teeth or without, dark green above and pale green below with some hairs; twigs stout, gray and smooth; bark dark and furrowed with a diamond pattern; fruit not winged to base, seed bulges out from wing; winter buds brown, leaf scar is shaped like a shield;

[V Max Brown, 2011]





# [Common] Lilac

*Syringa vulgaris* L. (Introduced)

Oleaceae (Olive Family)

Oak Openings Metropark, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: shrub; flowers light to dark purple or white, and stand in upright inflorescences (panicles); leaves ovate and entire, long-pointed, glabrous, mostly cordate base; single leaf bundle scar; fruit a capsule; often planted or found in old homesteads (many species and hybrids); spring

[V Max Brown, 2006]

