

CHIONANTHUS VIRGINICUS L.
Fringe-Tree

FAMILY: Oleaceae.

HABIT: Tall shrub or small tree to 15 m.; flowering April in Ohio, *A. viridis* is at the northeastern-most extension of its range and may be at its environmental limits. Its Ohio range may be accurately known as it is conspicuous and easily identified.

SIMILAR SPECIES: This species is quite distinctive when in flower. The showy clusters of white petals make this a striking plant that could not be confused with any native Ohio plant. *Chionanthus japonicus*, an introduced cultivar from Asia, is similar, but is not known as an escape. In vegetative condition, it could possibly be confused with a species of *Cornus*, also with simple, opposite entire leaves, but the branches are vaguely four-angled in *Chionanthus* and round in *Cornus*.

TOTAL RANGE: NJ to FL, w. irregularly to s. OH, s. MO, e. OK, and e. TX.

STATE RANGE: There are post-1980 records from Gallia, Jackson, Lawrence, Scioto, and Vinton counties. There are pre-1980 records from Adams, Auglaize, Greene, Meigs, and Monroe counties. In addition, Braun (1961) lists a Pike County record.

HABITAT: A variety of dry to mesic situations in both openings and wooded areas on calcareous to acidic soils. It grows and flowers best in open areas, however.

HAZARDS: Collection for horticultural purposes. This plant is commonly planted for its beautiful dense display of white blossoms in the spring. Also, shading out by woody species through succession.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, but probably good due to its tolerance of disturbance.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Collect flowering or fruiting material. Attempt to determine if plant was planted or is adventive from plantings.

COMMENTS: Although certainly not common in Ohio, this plant may well be more frequent than the records indicate. It apparently does not flower well in dense shade and is very inconspicuous when not in flower. Some Ohio plantings are from specimens dug up in nearby woods, and new sites may be located by asking owners where they obtained their plants.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Braun, E.L. 1961. The woody plants of Ohio. The Ohio State University Press, Columbus, Ohio. 362 p.

Gleason, H.A., and A. Cronquist. 1991. Manual of vascular plants of northeastern United States and adjacent Canada. New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, New York. 910 pp.



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