

ULMUS THOMASII Sarg.
Rock Elm

FAMILY: Ulmaceae

SYNONYM: *Ulmus racemosa* Thomas

HABIT: Tree to 30 m.; flowering late April; fruiting early May.

SIMILAR SPECIES: Very similar to young specimens of American elm (*Ulmus americana*) and somewhat resembling red elm (*U. rubra*). The fruits are the best identifying feature for these species. Vegetative characters, such as twigs and leaves, are not reliable for accurate determination.

TOTAL RANGE: Que. to s. MI, and SD, s. locally to NJ, WV, TN, and MO.

STATE RANGE: Post-1980 records exist from Allen, Erie, Fulton, Hancock, Huron, Ottawa and Wood counties. Pre-1980 records exist from 10 counties: Cuyahoga, Franklin, Greene, Hardin, Henry, Logan, Lorain, Pickaway, Ross and Wayne. Not all of these reports may be accurate; furthermore, there is an additional dubious record from Athens County.

HABITAT: A variety of moist or seasonally flooded situations, usually in non-acidic soils: floodplains, swamps.

HAZARDS: Logging; mechanical disturbance of the habitat.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Probably not good, since it is reported that natural reproduction is poor, and growth is slow.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Fruiting material is required for accurate determination.

COMMENTS: Although there are numerous pre-1980 specimens of *Ulmus thomasii*, this species seems very rare in Ohio today. This may reflect the destruction of its swamp and riverine habitats, or it may indicate the lack of modern collections. This species is easily confused with other elms; these other species often occur in the same habitat as rock elm. Intensive searching in suitable habitats and collections of fruiting elms may uncover additional stations for this elusive species.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Deam, C.C. 1940. Authorized reprint 1970. Flora of Indiana. Verlag Von J. Cramer, S-H Service Agency, New York, NY. 1236 p.

Elliot, J.C. 1954. Studies in and near Michigan's Tension Zone: 1. A northward extension for the range of *Ulmus thomasii* Sarg. Am. Midl. Natl. 52: 370-373.

Harlow, W.M. and E.S. Harlan. 1937. Textbook of dendrology. McGraw Hill Book Co., Inc. New York. 527 p.

Little, E.L., Jr. 1971. Atlas of United States trees. Vol. I. Conifers and important hardwoods. US Dept. Agric. Misc. Publ. No. 1146. Map 200-E.



Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Division of Natural Areas and Preserves

Created: 12/1982 James F. Burns, Allison W. Cusick