THUJA OCCIDENTALIS L.
Arbor Vitae

FAMILY: Cupressaceae

HABIT: An evergreen tree up to 20 meters tall.

SIMILAR SPECIES: It may superficially be confused with Juniperus virginiana, but differs by its scale-like leaves and small, elongate cones.

TOTAL RANGE: Quebec west to Manitoba, south to n. Minn., Wis., n. Ill., n. Ind., Ohio, N.Y., and Maryland; limy areas in the mts. of Kentucky, W.Va., Tenn., Virginia, and N.C.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): Post-1980 records are from Adams, Champaign, Clark, Delaware, Franklin, Greene, Highland, Lorain, Ross, and Scioto. Pre-1980 records are from Clermont, Ottawa, and Union. Braun (1961) also reports it from Erie and Mahoning counties. Some of these records may be of naturalized or planted shrubs.

HABITAT: Open to semi-open habitats on calcareous substrates; cliffs, limestone ledges, uplands, and fens.

HAZARDS: Overshading by taller, faster-growing woody species; deer browsing.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, possibly good, but this species grows very slowly.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Collect mature specimens.

COMMENTS: There are many cultivars of T. occidentalis, which makes identification difficult. An attempt should be made to determine if the population is native or adventive. Chambers (1993) notes that deer browsing greatly reduces reproductive success.

SELECTED REFERENCES:


Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Division of Natural Areas and Preserves

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