

Natural. Valued. Protected.

Red Mulberry (*Morus rubra*)

Red Mulberry is a small tree that grows 6-18 metres tall. The leaves are quite large, and heart-shaped. The bark of mature trees is reddish in colour and flaky. The fleshy fruit is deep red and matures in mid-July.

Habitat

In Ontario, Red Mulberry grows in moist, forested habitats and on both sandy and limestone-based loamy soils. It is often found in areas where the forest canopy is quite open and allows lots of sunlight to reach the forest floor, but it will tolerate some shade.

Range

Red Mulberry occurs in eastern North American forests. In Canada, it is only found in the Carolinian Zone (the small area of Ontario southwest of Toronto to Sarnia down to the shores of Lake Erie) near rivers, the shores of Lake Erie, and the slopes of the Niagara Escarpment.

Threats

The greatest threat to Red Mulberry is cross-breeding with the non-native White Mulberry. A variety of diseases, including twig blight and dieback, weaken individual trees. Prolonged drought will also cause decline and death of trees. Habitat destruction due to agriculture and urban development continues to threaten this species. Invasive species may directly or indirectly threaten Red Mulberry by changing the forest structure where it lives.

Protection

Red Mulberry and its habitat are protected under Ontario's *Endangered Species Act*.

For more information on legislation that helps protect Ontario's species at risk visit ontario.ca/speciesatrisk.

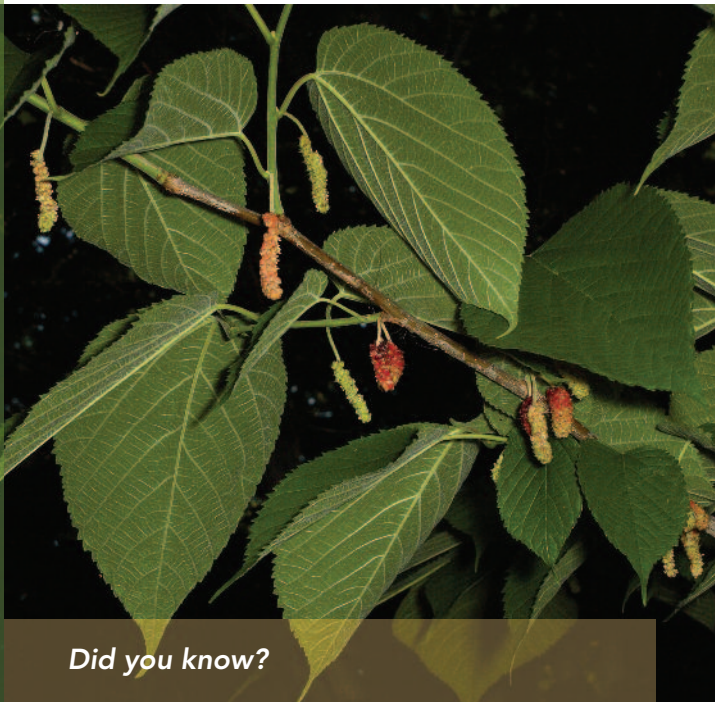


Photo credit: Allen Woodliffe

Did you know?

There are fewer than 300 Red Mulberry trees remaining in Ontario.

Red Mulberry can be easily confused with the non-native White Mulberry and hybrids of the two species.

Natural. Valued. Protected.

Provincial Status: Endangered

What You Can Do to Help Red Mulberry

- The Ministry of Natural Resources tracks species at risk, such as Red Mulberry. You can use an online form to report your sightings to the Natural Heritage Information Centre. Photographs with specific locations or mapping coordinates are always helpful! nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca
- Report any illegal activity related to plants and wildlife to 1-877-TIPS-MNR (847-7667).
- Private landowners have a very important role to play in Red Mulberry recovery. If you find Red Mulberry on your property, you may be eligible for stewardship programs that support the protection and recovery of species at risk and their habitats. For more information contact the Ministry of Natural Resources.
- Volunteer with a local nature club, stewardship council or provincial park to participate in surveys or stewardship work focused on species at risk www.ontariostewardship.org
- Invasive species seriously threaten many of Ontario's species at risk. To learn what you can do to help reduce the threat of invasive species, visit: www.invadingspecies.com; www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca; and www.invasivespecies.gc.ca.
- There is a program geared to eligible farms registered under the Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan to encourage greater protection and conservation of habitat for species at risk. For more information, visit: www.omafr.gov.on.ca/english/environment/efp/efp.htm.
- The Carolinian Zone of southern Ontario supports an impressive diversity of plants and wildlife, including many species at risk. Carolinian Canada Coalition is working to protect and restore the natural heritage in this important area. For more information, visit www.carolinian.org.
- To participate in projects that benefit wildlife in the Niagara Glen area, consider becoming a member of the Friends of Niagara Parks volunteer group: www.niagaraparksnature.com.
- As with many other rare plants and animals, Red Mulberry is at risk due to the loss of forested areas. You can help by protecting any forests and surrounding natural vegetation on your property.

Did you know?

Unlike most fruit trees that are pollinated by insects, the flowers of Red Mulberry are pollinated by the wind.

For additional information:

Visit the species at risk website at ontario.ca/speciesatrisk
 Contact your MNR district office
 Contact the Natural Resources Information Centre
 1-800-667-1940
 TTY 1-866-686-6072
mnr.nric.mnr@ontario.ca
ontario.ca/mnr