

# AMUR CORKTREE

[*Phellodendron amurense* Rupr.]

## PHAM2



Fig. 1 © 2004 Nick Kurzenko

**Problem:** Native to eastern Asia,<sup>1,5</sup> Amur cork-tree (AC) was introduced to the United States in 1856.<sup>1</sup> It outcompetes native tree and shrub species in disturbed forest habitats.<sup>3</sup>

**Habit:** Deciduous, broad spreading tree; 15 m (~49 ft) tall,<sup>4</sup> to 30 m (98 ft)<sup>5</sup> (Fig. 1).

**Reproduction:** Seed; dispersed by birds and other animals;<sup>3</sup> germinate like beans without any treatment.<sup>1</sup>

**Leaves:** Opposite, pinnately compound,<sup>2</sup> 5 to 13 leaflets<sup>1,4</sup> (Fig. 2), darker green above and glabrous to pubescent below,<sup>1,4</sup> turning yellow in the fall,<sup>1,4</sup> strong odor when crushed;<sup>3</sup> Axillary buds enclosed by the base of the rachis.<sup>1,4</sup>



Fig. 2 UCONN Plants Database

**Stems:** Stout, orange-yellow to yellow-gray, changing to brown;<sup>1</sup> lenticels prominent when young, inner bark bright yellow<sup>1,4</sup> (Fig. 3). Bark on older trees is gray, ridged, and deeply furrowed<sup>1,4</sup> (Fig. 4).

**Flowers:** Late May<sup>1</sup> to early June;<sup>1,4</sup> dioecious (male and female flowers occur on different trees), yellow green,<sup>1,4</sup> borne in ~5 to 9 cm (2 to 3 ½ in) long panicles<sup>1</sup> [Fig. 5 (female flowers) and Fig. 6 (male flowers)].

**Fruits/Seeds:** Ripening September to October and persisting into winter;<sup>1,4,5</sup> green turning to black, 8 to 12 mm (~1/8 to 1/2 in)<sup>4</sup> diameter, five-seeded drupe;<sup>1,2,5</sup> strong odor when bruised or



Fig. 3 (inset)

Fig. 4

Pat Breen

UGA 2188028

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Fig. 5 UCONN Plants database



Fig. 6 Pat Breen



Fig. 7 UGA 1367019

crushed.  
Borne only on female trees<sup>1,4</sup>  
(Fig. 7).

**Habitat:**  
Disturbed woodlands and road-

sides;<sup>4</sup> prefers full sun and rich soils, but tolerates shade,<sup>5</sup> drought and flooding.<sup>3</sup>

**Similar Species:** At first glance, the native ash species (*Fraxinus* L.) are similar in appearance. However, although both species have opposite, pinnately compound leaves, ash buds are visible and not hidden by the leaf rachis<sup>2,4</sup> (Fig 8). Ash trees also produce samaras (Fig. 9), not berry-like drupes.<sup>2,4</sup> The native hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis* L.) has similar mature bark (Fig. 10), but the branching is alternate, leaves are simple (Fig. 11), and fruit are borne in small clusters with each having a stem or pedicel.<sup>2,4</sup>



Fig. 8 UGA 5032094



Fig. 9 UGA 5349064



Fig. 10 UGA 5034019



Fig. 11 UGA 0008342