

School-to-Nature

White Oak Tree

The Scientific name of this popular tree is Quercus Alba. It grows from 50 to 100 feet tall and 50 to 80 feet wide. It is perhaps the most important oak species, along with the red oak, in the southern Wisconsin forests. It is distinguished from other oaks by its dark bluish green, rounded, lobed leaves, and light ash gray bark from where it got its name. In the fall the leaves turn bright red to wine in color. Young oak trees grow for years in the forest



understory; but they grow and mature best with about 4 hours of sun. They like moist, rich, slightly acidic soil. They tolerate drought conditions because of a long tap root.

In the spring, the flowers develop and are both male and female. The male parts are called "catkins," 4-inch long, yellow hanging clusters.

The female parts are smaller reddish spikes at the base of the catkins (harder to spot but visible in the photo to the right). The acorns that develop are over 1 inch long.



Of the 8 types of oak trees in Wisconsin, there are 3 white oak varieties: White Oak, Swamp White Oak, and Burr Oak.

One of the most useful woods, White Oak is used for furniture, flooring, boat building, wine and whiskey barrels, and cabinetry. It is tough and resistant to water. It

accounts for 3.2 % of the farm-grown trees raised for timber use.

The CC School To Nature page online also has articles to read about Red Oak, Burr Oak, and types of acorns.



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