

Ironwood (*Carpinus caroliniana*)

Origin: Native

Status in Park: Rare, occurring in low, moist woods.

Characteristics: As tall as 30 feet, 1 ½ feet in diameter, the trees in Spring Creek are much smaller; crown rounded; bark slate gray, thin, smooth, with muscle-like ridges; flowers catkins; fruits nutlets, borne at the base of a 3-lobed green “leaf”, crowded together in a fruiting cluster.

Leaves: Alternate, simple; 2-4 inches long, firm, tapering to a sharp point; edge sharply double-toothed; bluish-green above, yellowish green beneath.



Location of tagged tree:



Notes: The wood is not of much commercial value, but it is extremely dense and hard and does not readily split or crack. It is used for hammer handles and other tools. Leaves of ironwood look very similar to those of Hop Hornbeam, but the bark is distinctive: smooth in Ironwood versus shaggy in Hop Hornbeam.