

PLATANACEAE SYCAMORE OR PLANE TREE FAMILY

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Monoecious trees with branching hairs; bark peeling off in irregular sheets revealing a smooth surface. LEAVES deciduous, alternate, simple palmately lobed or rarely merely toothed, palmately or rarely pinnately veined; stipules thin, sheathing, entire or lobed; petioles dilated at base and enclosing the axillary bud. INFLORESCENCES dense, globose, unisexual heads, these solitary or arranged in racemes. FLOWERS: sepals 3-8, united or distinct, inconspicuous, scale-like, sometimes absent in staminate flowers; petals 3-6, minute, longer than sepals; petals of staminate flowers cuneiform-sulcate, scarious pointed; petals of pistillate flowers acute, sometimes absent; stamens as many as the sepals and opposite them; filaments very short to obsolete; staminodes in pistillate flowers 3-4; carpels (3-)5-8(-9), separate, 1-loculed, in 2-3 whorls, surrounded by persistent hairs, ovaries superior; styles terminal, long, slender the stigmas along the inner face; ovules 1-2; rudimentary carpels sometimes present in staminate flowers. FRUITS densely hairy achenes or small nutlets. SEEDS elongate-oblong, pendulous. -- one genus *Platanus*.

Platanus L. Sycamore or Plane Tree

Characters of the family. --(Greek *platys* = broad). 6-7 spp. in Eur, sw Asia, and N. Amer.

Platanus wrightii S. Watson (for Charles Wright) Arizona Sycamore. --Trees 10-25 m high; trunk 6-20 dm in diameter; bark greenish-brown, peeling to reveal whitish inner bark. LEAVES broadly ovate, 10-25(-30) cm long, about as wide as long, palmately divided usually below the middle into 3-7 lobes, the lobes long and attenuate, entire or dentate; base cordate or truncate, occasionally wedge-shaped; upper surface light green, glabrous or slightly pubescent; lower surface paler, sparsely to densely tomentose, especially when young; petioles 5-10 cm long; stipules foliaceous, sheathing, entire or dentate, sometimes lacking. INFLORESCENCES of 1-4 heads in pendant axillary or terminal racemes; peduncles 2-3 cm long; staminate heads dark red, on axillary peduncles; pistillate heads green to red, on terminal peduncles. FLOWERS appearing with the leaves; sepals of staminate flowers 3-6, tiny scale-like; sepals of pistillate flowers (3-)4(-6), rounded; petals longer than the sepals, cuneiform, scarious; stamens elongate-ovoid; ovaries sessile, oblong, persistently hairy at base; styles red, papillose, stigmatic to below the middle. FRUITS in heads 1.5-2.0 cm in diameter, on peduncles 10-20 cm long; achenes elongate, obovoid, truncate, 5-10 mm long, surrounded by long hairs; styles persistent. [*Platanus racemosa* Nutt. var. *wrightii* (S. Watson) L. D. Benson]. --Along streambanks in canyons: Cochise, Coconino, Greenlee, Gila, Maricopa, Mohave, Pima, Pinal, Santa Cruz, Yavapai cos.; 600-2450 m (2000-8000 ft); Mar-May; NM; Chih., Sin., Son., Mex.