



Maine Department of Conservation  
Natural Areas Program

*Quercus coccinea* Muenchh.

Scarlet Oak

**Habitat:** Dry sandy soil. [Hardwood to mixed forest (forest, upland)]

**Range:** Southwestern Maine to Georgia, west to southern Michigan, Missouri, and Mississippi. This tree is widely planted as an ornamental.

**Phenology:** Flowers May - June. Acorns ripen September - October.

**Family:** Fagaceae

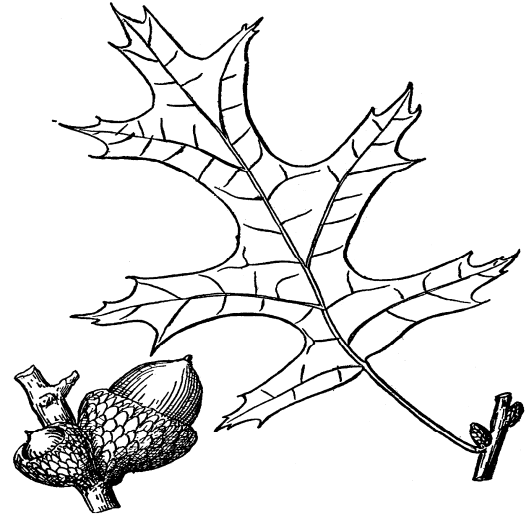


Illustration from Britton & Brown's Illustrated Flora of the Northern United States and Canada, 2nd ed.

**Aids to Identification:** Scarlet oak is identified as a member of the red oak group because of the bristle tips on its leaves and the fact that acorn development takes two years. It is unique within this group because of the following combination of characters: end buds are hairy but not angled; leaves have very deeply sinuses, with 7-9 lobes; acorn cup is shaped like a bowl (conceals 1/3-1/2 of the nut), with shiny cup-scales; and inner bark is reddish. The nuts of this species have 1 or more rings of small pits near the apex. Black oak, with which it is most likely to be confused, has strongly angled buds.

**Ecological characteristics:** Occurrences in Maine are limited to the sandy soils of York and Cumberland counties.

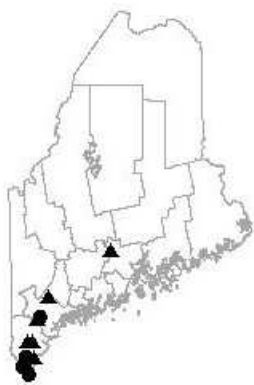
**Synonyms:**

**Rarity of *Quercus coccinea***

<b>State Rank:</b>	S1	Critically imperiled in Maine because of extreme rarity or vulnerability to extirpation.
<b>New England Rank:</b>	None	
<b>Global Rank:</b>	G5	Demonstrably widespread, abundant, and secure globally.

**Status of *Quercus coccinea***

<b>Federal Status:</b>	None	No Federal Status.
<b>State Status:</b>	Endangered	Rare and in danger of being lost from the state in the foreseeable future; or federally listed as Endangered. Listing criteria met: Few individuals, At edge of range, Declining populations, Vulnerable to human activity



- ▲ Historical (before 1982)  
● Recent (1982 - present)

### Known Distribution in Maine:

This rare plant has been documented from a total of 10 town(s) in the following county(ies): Androscoggin, Cumberland, Waldo, York.

**Dates of documented observations are:** 1893, 1896, 1916 (3), 1937, 1990, 1996, 1999, 2001

### Reason(s) for rarity:

At northern limit of range; not rare southward.

### Conservation considerations:

This plant is restricted statewide to southern Maine, and known populations are vulnerable to conversion of their habitat to residential or commercial use. Populations are small and could be eliminated by logging.

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The information in this fact sheet was downloaded from the Natural Areas Program's Biological and Conservation Database on 14 MAY 2004. We are grateful to our Botanical Advisory Group for additional information on particular species, and in particular, to Arthur Haines for his assistance with identifying characteristics and taxonomic questions. Nomenclature follows Haines and Vining's *Flora of Maine* (V.F. Thomas Press, 1998); where older works refer to a plant by another name, it is given under "Synonyms". The Natural Areas Program, within the Department of Conservation, maintains the most comprehensive source of information on Maine's rare or endangered plants and rare or exemplary natural communities, and is a member of the Association for Biodiversity Information.

If you know of locations for this plant or would like more information on this species,  
please contact the Natural Areas Program  
State House Station 93, Augusta, Maine 04333; telephone (207) 287-8044.

