

**Slippery Elm**  
*Ulmus rubra*



**Description:** Medium to large trees (to 100 feet tall, 3+ feet diam.) with broadly rounded or flat-topped open crown. The only elm with leaves having asymmetrical bases and rough, sandpapery upper surface

**Leaves:** Alternate on twig, become singly on very short (>1/2 inch), stout, hairy stems. Blades to 6 inches long, 1/2 as wide; bases strongly asymmetrical, tips pointed; edges coarsely doubly saw-toothed. Dark green above and very rough to the touch; paler and less rough below.

**Bark:** Gray-brown to reddish-brown with shallow furrows and flattened ridges; outer bark uniformly reddish-tan to light brown in cross-section. Inner bark with a sticky, slippery sap (hence common name). Sap once used in medicines to ease sore throats.

**Flowers:** Bisexual flowers in dense greenish to reddish clusters on very short stalks before leaves emerge.

**Fruits:** Fruits dry, with papery, circular wings (to 3/4 inch across) surrounding a single seed. Wing edges not hairy; shallowly notched at top.

Seeds: Seeds wind scattered April-May

**Habitat/Range:** Floodplain forests and bottomland woods. Also found in mesic (sometimes even rocky) upland woods. Range, throughout Indiana