

# Osage-Orange

Who am I?

**Osage-Orange** (*Maclura pomifera*) is a member of the mulberry family. It can grow to be 60 feet tall and has bright yellow leaves in the fall. The fruit is large, lumpy, and greenish yellow, and resembles a large rough orange. Other names for the Osage-Orange are Hedge Apple, Horse Apple, Bodark, Bow-wood, Mock-orange, Bois d'arc and Naranjo chino.

Where can you find me?

The natural range of Osage-Orange is in the Red River drainage of Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas; and in the Blackland Prairies, Post Oak Savannas, and Chisos Mountains of Texas. However, Osage-Orange has been planted as a hedge in all the 48 conterminous States and in southeastern Canada. It grows best on rich bottom-land soils, but it will grow on just about any upland soil type including those too alkaline for most forest trees. In NJ they are typically found in hedgerows, fence rows for a windbreak, ditch banks and around abandoned farmsteads. It thrives best on moist soils but tolerates extreme drought. It is resistant to heat, road salt, and urban air pollution.

What Ecological Services do I provide?

Like all trees, Osage-Orange trees take in carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), release oxygen by way of photosynthesis, and store carbon in their trunks.

Osage-Orange heartwood is hard, durable and the most decay-resistant of all North American timbers and is immune to termites. It is primarily used for fence posts. Osage-Orange wood extractives are used for food processing, pesticide manufacturing, and dye making.

The Osage Native Americans used the wood for dye and bows.

The strong-smelling fruit repels cockroaches. The thorny branches and dense foliage of Osage-Orange trees provide shelter for birds and small mammals and some animals, like squirrels, White-tailed Deer, and quail, eat the fruit of the Osage-Orange tree. The seeds of the Osage-Orange are edible, but the fruit itself is generally considered inedible. The fruit is bitter and has a latex-like liquid that can irritate the skin. Numerous organic compounds have also been obtained from various parts of the tree and an antifungal agent and a nontoxic antibiotic useful as a food preservative have been extracted from the heartwood.

My name is Finglas. You can find me on the Yellow Trail



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