

# Pin Oak: *Quercus palustris* Muenchh.

**Uses:** Due to this species' form, adaptability, growth rate, longevity, and fall foliar display, it is popular for ornamental usage. Pin oak is utilized by many game species, especially wood ducks, white-tail deer, and wild turkey

**Description:** Pin oak is a moderately large tree with normal heights ranging from 70 to 90 feet with diameters between 2 and 3 feet. The bark of this tree is smooth, reddish to grayish-brown during the juvenile period, becoming darker and shallowly fissured as the tree growth slows with age. Clusters of pointed buds are located at the tips of twigs. Three to five inch alternate leaves have 5 to 7 points or lobes with bristled tips and deep C-shaped sinuses. The leaves change in color from a dark green to a deep scarlet red in fall.

The flowers of pin oak emerge soon after new leaves unfold in spring (April to mid-May). The acorns that develop are roundish, short stalked, 3/8 to 1/2 inches long, and capped with a thin and shallow saucer-like cup

Pin oak is often confused with scarlet oak (*Q. coccinea*) due to similar appearance. Scarlet oak is an upland species that prefers soils with good drainage on dry sites.

**Adaptation and Distribution:** It is seldom found growing above elevations of 800 feet, or on sloped ground. Pin oak grows in practically pure stands with good growth rates on wet, shallow sites with heavy soils that drain poorly.

**Management:** Pin oak typically requires management only during the first few years after outplanting to a permanent site. Weed competition and deer browse must be managed in many locations. Site preparation to control weeds the year prior to outplanting will pay dividends in increased growth rate. Contact herbicides, used according to the label, and/or control by tillage are most commonly used. There are a variety of deer control products that may be useful such as tubes or mesh sleeves over the seedling.

Weeds and deer control require repetitive action and maintenance to be effective.

## **Pests and Potential Problems**

Livestock must be kept out of tree and shrub planting areas. Insect and diseases include gypsy moth and oak wilt. Gypsy moth should be controlled when the trees are young, but older trees can tolerate infrequent defoliation. Little can be done about oak wilt. Entire stands may be killed by prolonged flooding.

