

Chestnut Oak

Quercus prinus L.



The chestnut oak is native to eastern North America. This oak is in the white oak subgenus, *Quercus* (or *Leucobalanus*). This is a long-lived tree, but normally very slow-growing in nature. It is a common ridgetop tree, and is very drought-tolerant, as well as tolerant of very poor soils. Not recommended for alkaline soils. The bark is rugged and heavily-ridged, unusual for the white oak group. The leaves have large teeth, and are very similar to both chinkapin oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*) and swamp chestnut oak (*Quercus michauxii*), but the bark is very different from those species. It is also called rock oak or mountain oak, and the scientific name *Quercus montana* is sometimes used. It sometimes grows perched upon rocks. You may receive these seed already with substantial roots, because these acorns sprout roots almost immediately on landing on the ground.

Cultivation

Plant these acorns as soon as you receive them! Normal winter stratification of the acorns is all that is necessary. This can easily be accomplished by planting the seed in fall or early winter, preferably under two or more inches of humus. Alternatively, this can be accomplished by embedding the acorns in a planting mix and storing in the freezer for ten days, then the refrigerator for another sixty days. This species roots immediately on contacting moist earth in the fall, but the tops do not emerge until the spring.

Note

Many acorns are subject to one or another species of acorn weevil, mostly in genus *Curculio*. These have legless grubs that resemble maggots. They grow in the acorn from early formation, and then bore a hole to exit after the acorn has dropped from the tree. We try to screen for these and pull infested acorns, but we cannot catch them all. If you find one of these grubs, they are harmless. Simply dispose of it. The acorn is probably still viable.

Conservation Seed

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