

Yellow buckeye

Aesculus octandra Marsh.



The yellow buckeye is very similar to and very closely related to the Ohio buckeye, *Aesculus glabra*. The two can easily be distinguished when fruiting, because the Ohio buckeye has spines on the seed husk, while that of the yellow buckeye is smooth. The Ohio buckeye also has a skunky odor when twigs are scratched, while the yellow buckeye has a somewhat rank, but not skunky, odor. The Ohio buckeye tends to grow in more open and less acid environments, while the yellow buckeye tends to grow in more acid and wooded environments. The yellow buckeye also has attractive yellow flowers, and is generally very easy to grow.

This tree has opposite, palmately-divided compound leaves, with usually five leaflets per leaf. The light-gray bark is unusual, often with scaly plates that look somewhat as if a large thumb were pressed into the bark, although sometimes the bark is quite smooth. This tree often loses its leaves in late summer. The yellow buckeye has large, flesh-colored winter buds.

If this tree is transplanted, it is recommended to do so in earliest spring.

The name *Aesculus flava* is also used.

Cultivation

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.

Conservation Seed

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