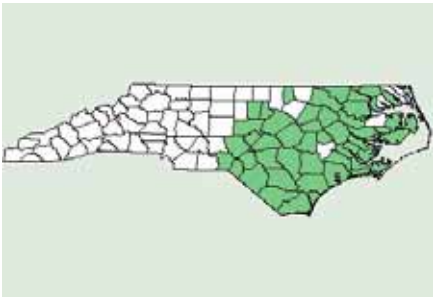


RED BAY

Persea borbonia

Its leaves can be substituted for the common spice, bay leaf. Also called as shore bay and carolina bay.



Description: A graceful native evergreen that develops a dense, pyramidal crown with gently drooping branches. It has a multi-stemmed growing habit similar to a live oak, but it can be pruned to a single, short central leader trunk. Its bright green, aromatic leaves are simple and oblong. Has small bright blue to shiny black fruit maturing in the fall. It has slender twigs and reddish-brown scaly bark.

Natural Habitat: Found in moist sites along streams and swamps.

Conservation Status: Is Endangered in Maryland.

Size: 30-50 ' with mature height reaching to 70' and 3' in diameter

Growth Rate: Moderate

Light: Light Shade

Planting and Care: Moist to somewhat dry soil

Ornamental Value: Occasionally used as an ornamental because of the evergreen leaves and its fruit but this tree is best suited when planted in combination with other wet woodland trees and shrubs in groves or as a specimen.

Landscape Usage: Great for wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); useful in buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway. Ideally planted near a deck or patio; as a reclamation plant; shade tree; specimen or as a residential street tree.

Commercial/Traditional Uses: Used sparingly in interior finishing as well as in boar construction. Red bay has very aromatic leaves and can be substituted for the common spice, bay leaf.

Wildlife Benefits: The fruit is eaten by several species of songbirds, squirrel and wild turkey. In the order of volumetric importance Red Bay fruit ranks 25th in a list of 63 food items. Its seeds form a sizable portion of the bobwhite diet during the fall and winter months. Black bear and deer consume the fruits and leaves. Its foliage is a larval plant for spicebush swallowtails.

