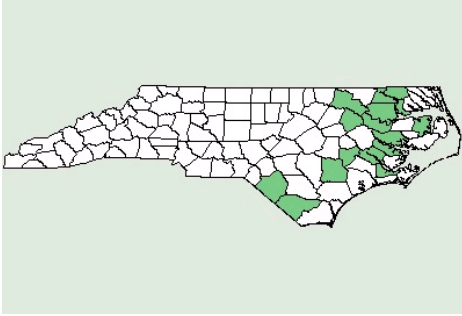


WATER TUPELO

Nyssa aquatica

One of the few trees that can survive long periods inundated by water. Commonly called cottongum, swamp tupelo, tupelo-gum, and water-gum



Description: A large, long-lived deciduous tree with a swollen base that tapers to a long, clear bole. Leaves are alternate, simple, and somewhat ovate, tapering to a point at the tip. Inconspicuous white flowers appear in spring. The oblong, fleshy fruits ripen in September and are purple. They enclose a single seed and are bitter.

Natural Habitat: Native to the southern Atlantic and Gulf coasts and the lower Mississippi valley. In NC, found in swamps and flood plains.

Conservation Status: Abundant throughout its range.

Size: 30- 100' tall, 20-30' spread.

Growth Rate: Moderate.

Light: Full sun to part shade.

Planting and Care: Difficult to transplant because of its taproot. Will grow in a range of soil types commonly in standing water.

Ornamental Value: Graceful and offering some fall color.

Landscape Usage: A good tree for wet areas around buildings.

Commercial/Traditional Uses: When dried properly, the lumber is used for boxes, pallets, crates, baskets, broom handles, floors, furniture and pulp. Buttresses of trees growing in flooded areas contain wood that is much lighter in weight than that from upper portions of the same trees. The butt portion is probably best suited for pulping products.

Wildlife Benefits: The fruit is consumed by wood ducks, several other kinds of birds, and by squirrels, raccoons, and deer. Flowers have some value as a source of tupelo honey. Deer feed on foliage, twigs, and stump sprouts.