

## Sawtooth Oak (*Quercus acutissima*)

Sawtooth Oak, *Quercus acutissima*, is a tall, nut-producing deciduous tree of the Family *Fagaceae*. It is not native to the United States, but because of its high yield of acorns and its aesthetic qualities, Sawtooth Oak is a popularly planted tree. It can grow to a height of 45 feet and spread to 50 feet. In Latin, “*Quercus*” means oak and “*acutissima*” is a reference to sharp edges, which give this tree its common name. The margins of the leaves of this oak are highly serrated.

Sawtooth Oak is culturally important to many Asian societies in the past and present. Sawtooth leaves were fed to silkworms and silk was one of Asia’s most important historical exports. A lust for silk is partly responsible for early east/west relations. Acorns were ground and used as a remedy for hemorrhaging, diarrhea and menstrual complications. Much like the dye extracted from the Amur Cork Tree, Sawtooth Oak was also processed to make dye that was important for recording ancient Chinese history. A brown or black dye was extracted from this specific tree.

While the Sawtooth Oak has pleasant leaves and produces large crops of acorns, due to its ability to spread beyond intended plantings and outcompete native species, and the lack of a sterile cultivar, Sawtooth Oak should no longer be planted as an ornamental.