

Black Ash

Mohawk Name: Esha
Latin Name: *Fraxinus nigra*

The northernmost native ash, Black Ash takes its name from the dark brown heartwood. Young black ash has bark that resembles cork. The wood of this ash tree is very unusual: when struck lengthwise, it splits into thin sheets along the grain. Black ash grows almost exclusively in low-lying areas that are very wet and marshy. This species does not adapt well to dry soil. It is often found with red and silver maple, white elm, eastern white cedar and balsam fir.

General Description: Tree with narrow, rounded crown of upright branches. Ranges in height from 9 to 15 meters (50-75 feet) and is 0.3 meters (1-2 feet) in diameter.

Leaves: Opposite; pinnately compound; 30-40 cm long with 7-11 leaflets; broadly lance-shaped; finely saw-toothed; stalkless. Dark green above, paler beneath with tufts of rust-colored hairs along midvein; brown in autumn.

Bark: Gray; corky; fissured into soft scaly patches that rub off easily.

Fruits: 2.5-4 cm (1-1.75 inches) long; key with broad oblong wing extending to base of flat body; hanging on clusters; maturing in late summer.

Medicinal Uses: Laxative, diuretic, kidney and urinary infections.

Habitat: Wet soils of swamps, peat bogs and streams, especially cold swamps where drainage is poor; in coniferous and hardwood forests.

Commercial and Cultural Uses: Splints form the Black Ash are woven into chair seats, snow shoes, sleds, furniture, drum frames and baskets. Basket making has been around for centuries – as long as the Mohawk people. At first, all baskets were designed for a specific purpose such as pack baskets, laundry and clothes baskets, sewing baskets and corn washing baskets. In addition to these utilitarian uses, ornamental or “fancy” baskets continue to be fashioned today. In the wedding ceremony, baskets are exchanged in the place of rings. In her basket are items of clothing, which symbolizes her commitment to her husband and any children they have to mend and keep their clothes clean. In his basket is food, which symbolizes his commitment as the provider of nourishment for his wife and children.

Excerpt from “Trees of the Akwesasne”, M. George & G. Hass, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne. For more information on Black Ash regeneration efforts, please call Richard David, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, Department of the Environment at (613) 575-2377, or Les Benedict, Akwesasne Task Force on the Environment at (518) 358-5937.



Commissioning Program

Welcome

Nelson Dubé
Primary Metals
Operations Manager

Thanksgiving Address

Students
Akwesasne Freedom School

Introductions

Kitty Samuel
Alcoa Public Affairs

Comments

Dr. Michael Bridgen
Associate Professor of Forestry
SUNY-ESF Ranger School
Wanakena, NY

One Million Trees

Erick Lewis
AEP Operations Manager

Tree Planting

Leslie Benedict
Son of Les Benedict
Esha Consulting

Refreshments will be served immediately following

The Trees:

*We now turn our thoughts to the trees.
The earth has many families of trees who have their own instructions and uses.
The maple is the leader of all trees, because it is the first to awaken in the Spring.
Some provide us with shelter and shade, others fruit, beauty and other useful things.
Many people of the world use a tree as a symbol of peace and strength.
With one mind, we greet and thank the Tree of Life.*

- Adapted from Ohenten Kariwatekwa

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Massena Operations

Wetland Project Commissioning

June 5, 2003



Celebrating
One Million Trees
Planted Worldwide

1998—2003

One Million Trees



Students from Massena Central High School's AP Environment class helped plant trees along the entrances to the plant in 1998—the first year of Alcoa's One Million Trees Program

In 1998, CEO Alain Belda commissioned the Alcoa "One Million Trees Program", an employee-focused tree planting program. His vision was to foster personal commitment to the environment by giving each employee at every Alcoa location globally 10 – 12 trees over the next ten years to plant in an area of significance to them. By 2008, one million trees would be added to the global ecosystem as a living demonstration of Alcoa's commitment to the environment and sustainable development. The program has also offered employees a personal role in helping Alcoa live up to that commitment and enhanced individual awareness of the world around them.

Each business location has developed its own program in a way that is meaningful and unique to it. At Massena Operations, over 20,000 trees have been distributed to employees, planted at the East and West facilities and donated in the community. Employees have planted Red Maple, Blue Spruce, Norwegian Spruce, White Spruce, Serbian Spruce, Lilac, Flowering Hawthorne, Red Oak and Black Cherry trees in their yards and neighborhoods. Additionally,

- 4,000 lilacs were given to visitors during Massena Operations 2002 Centennial Open House;
- 7,000 Black Ash and companion species were planted at the Wetlands Project to enhance the habitat and restore the trees so important for basket making material and medicinal purposes to the Akwesasne Mohawk Community;
- 300 trees were planted at the West Plant to enhance the natural beauty of the facility, improve drainage and re-vegetate areas where no longer used parking lots and building foundations once stood;

- 200 Red Oak and Serbian Spruce were donated to the Akwesasne Freedom School for use in educational programs
- Mature trees were donated to the Village of Massena to replace those damaged in the 1998 Ice Storm, improve Andrews Street Veterans Memorial Park and enhance Forest Place Park, an area originally developed by Alcoa nearly a century ago during the early years of Alcoa's partnership with the Massena community. Massena has earned National Arbor Day Foundation recognition as a "Tree City USA".

When Alcoa and Reynolds Metals merged in May 2000, East Plant employees were welcomed into the Alcoa family with a tree. It was the third year of Alcoa's One Million Tree Program.



REACHING THE GOAL IN HALF THE TIME

When the "One Million Trees Program" was instituted, Alcoa's goal -- one tree planted each year by each of the Company's 100,000 employees -- was quite ambitious. Consistent with our philosophy to excel in everything we do, we will reach this goal well ahead of schedule. On June 5th, in Pocos de Caldas, Brazil, Mr. Belda will plant the 1,000,000th tree as part of this program and announce Alcoa's new Tree Program goal, which will be as ambitious and rewarding as the first.

Massena Operations will simultaneously celebrate this accomplishment with the Commissioning of our Wetland Habitat adjacent to the East Plant. This site is also a newly established Black Ash forest, through a joint effort with Les Benedict of Esha Consulting and the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe Environment Division.



Alcoa's Wetland Habitat



Nearly 119 acres of natural and man-made lowlands, wetlands and open water areas were remediated at Alcoa's West Plant between 1991 and

2001 under Records of Decision and Orders on Consent by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). The remediated wetlands have now been replaced by expanding existing wetlands at Massena Operations East Plant (formerly Reynolds Metals St. Lawrence Reduction Plant).

Water flow patterns adjacent to the existing wetlands were altered by constructing embankments to impound water in upland areas and create new wetland areas. Over time, these newly expanded wetlands will develop into self-sustaining communities as seeds and root banks of various species present in the region colonize.

The design also includes enhancement features to foster wildlife habitat and educational and recreational opportunities. A public observation area will allow study of the wetland and its inhabitants. Bird watching will be of particular interest as 250 artificial nest sites for wood ducks, blue birds, wrens, mallards, bats, osprey and great blue heron were placed in and around the site. The bird houses, nest boxes and platforms will also attract hooded mergansers, kestrels, screech owls, saw-wret owls, woodpeckers, swallows, sparrows, chickadees, nuthatches and black ducks.

Alcoa worked with the Akwesasne Mohawk Community, Esha Consulting (Les Benedict) and SUNY ESF Forest Ranger School to plant 4,000 Black Ash trees and 3,000 companion species in the wetland habitat this year. Black Ash trees (*Esha* in Mohawk) are of major cultural importance to Massena Operations' neighbors in the Mohawk Community. Reforestation of the Black Ash will restore this important tree used in basket making and for medicinal purposes. The Alcoa Black Ash plot is the largest stand of Black Ash ever planted.

A wide variety of wildlife have made their homes in the Alcoa Wetland Habitat. Pictured here, a Great Blue Heron tests the waters in the newly created wetlands.

