

TREE SPECIES AT RISK IN THE BLACK CREEK WATERSHED

From the Ministry of Natural Resources S.A.R. listing for Ontario, several tree species that are native in the Black Creek watershed, have been identified at various levels of risk. These include:

ENDANGERED & regulated:

Cucumber Tree, *Magnolia acuminata*,
Red Mulberry, *Morus rubra*

THREATENED:

Common Hoptree, *Ptelea trifoliata*,
Dwarf Hackberry, *Celtis tenuifolia*,
Kentucky Coffeetree, *Gymnocladus dioica*,

ENDANGERED, not regulated:

Butternut, *Juglans cinera*,
American Chestnut, *Castanea dentata*.

SPECIAL CONCERN:

Blue Ash, *Fraxinus quadrangulata*,
Shumard Oak, *Quercus shumardii*

Of these, the Red Mulberry (Images A, B below), American Chestnut and the Butternut (Images C, D below) may have been once common in the watershed, while the others may have had a presence but were not significant components of local forests. Our watershed is to the northern limits of the ranges for these species. They currently exist and were once common in the Carolinian forest zones of the Niagara region and in the far south-western portion of Ontario.

Opportunity now exists to incorporate some of these 'endangered' species into our planting programs; in fact our historical documents indicate that programs of the late 80's included plantings of butternut.

Unfortunately some difficulties exist: the butternut suffers from a serious fungal disease problem, while the mulberry is prone to low reproduction rates and hybridization with exotic trees (white mulberry, native to Asia). In order to incorporate these species in our programs we will have to research programs under the Endangered Species Acts, both nationally and provincially, and also the availability of suitable nursery stock for each species within our zone.

