

Black locust *Robinia pseudoacacia*



Shrub or tree to 25 m tall with deeply furrowed, thick bark and usually paired thorns at the base of each compound leaf; thornless varieties have been developed. Leaves alternate, deciduous, pinnately compound; leaflets nine to 19, elliptic to ovate, 2 to 5 cm long, 1 to 2 cm wide. Flowers showy, white, 1.5 to 2 cm broad, very fragrant; borne in drooping racemes, 10 to 20 cm long. Pod 5

to 10 cm long, 1 to 2 cm broad, mostly four to eight seeded. Plant has been cultivated throughout the region and has widely escaped into open woods, roadsides, fence rows, old fields, and pinelands; sometimes in sandy areas but more common on clay soils. [Inset: paired thorns on stem]

Toxicity

Toxic principles include the phytotoxin robinin and the glycoside robitin. Horses, cattle, sheep, poultry, and humans may be poisoned by ingesting roots, bark, sprouts, seed pods, or trimmings. Horses are the animal most susceptible to the effects of black locust.

Symptoms

Symptoms include weakness, posterior paralysis, depression, loss of appetite, irregular pulse, difficult breathing, and diarrhea.

Treatment

Insert a stomach tube, and administer a laxative, such as mineral oil. Use stimulants, such as Digitalis ($\frac{1}{8}$ grain every 15 minutes for four doses).