

Spicebush *Lindera benzoin*

Kingdom: Plantae

Phylum: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Laurales

Family: Lauraceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

Spicebush is a shrub. It grows from about five to 15 feet tall. The bark is shiny brown and shows many lenticels. Leaves are alternate, ovate and smooth along their margin. Flowers are yellow and appear in small clusters before the leaves unfurl. Each flower is less than one-fourth inch wide. The fruit is fleshy with a single seed. The fruit is red when mature.

BEHAVIORS

The name “spicebush” was given to this plant because the leaves and twigs release a spicy odor when they are crushed. Flowers are produced from March through May. Pollinators are attracted to the flowers. Insects feed on the leaves and wood. Some birds eat the fruits.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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