



*Buckeye pod with seed*

## Planting Tips:

Plant from root cuttings or seeds. Plant seeds quickly while they are still firm due to their quick degeneration. This plant needs full sun to part shade. The buckeye needs moist, well-drained soil. The red buckeye dislikes dry soil, thus fairs poorly in droughts.

## Habitat:

Native to Mississippi, the red buckeye is found near the banks of streams, creeks, and rivers in well-drained areas.

## Visitor Education Center (VEC)

### About Us

The Visitor Education Center (VEC) at the North Mississippi Fish Hatchery is the first and only facility of its kind in Mississippi. It is owned and operated by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks.

In addition to the native habitat area, the VEC features a 10,000 gallon aquarium, interactive exhibits, displays, artifacts, fishing rodeo pond, gift shop and gallery, and the World Record White Crappie. All of these elements serve as entertaining and engaging learning experiences for all visitors.

The VEC promotes the sport of freshwater fishing in Mississippi, and encourages the conservation and stewardship of aquatic resources. The facility offers guided and self-guided tours along with a myriad of programs and workshops for the public.



*Buckeye flowers*

## MISSISSIPPI NATIVE: BUCKEYES

*(Aesculus pavia)*

**NMFH Visitor  
Education Center**

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*Buckeye pods*

## Description/Season:

This perennial shrub/tree displays red, bell-shaped flowers, and blooms in the spring (March – April).

The buckeye tree has a rounded appearance. This plant's leaves are a glossy, dark green on the topside but white and hairy underneath. These leaves are comprised of 5 leaflets, which turn yellow in the fall.

Seeds begin forming in the summer and through the fall. In the fall, the seeds are found dispersed under the plant. These seeds are shiny and reddish-brown.

## Size:

Flowers are 1 – 1 1/2 inches long; clusters are 6 – 10 inches long, and the plant itself usually reaches heights of no more than 10 feet. Nuts are usually 1 – 2 inches long. Leaflets can be as long as 6 inches with the stem measuring the same length.

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### *Other Names:*

*Red Buckeye, Scarlet Buckeye,  
and Firecracker Plant*

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## Interesting Facts:

This plant attracts bees and hummingbirds. **This plant is poisonous.** No part should be ingested, although soap can be made from the roots and black dye can be made from the wood.



*Buckeye nuts*

## Buckeyes and Fishing Past:

Native Americans used buckeye seeds to retrieve fish by grinding up seeds and throwing them in the water to stun the fish. Fish floated to the surface, making it easy for the Native Americans to harvest them.

The Choctaw used buckeye as a poison for arrows during warfare.



Information Sources: Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, MSU Extension, Clemson.edu, USDA, and VEC Staff. Pictures taken at the VEC (Wiggins, E.J.); property of MDWFP.

