

Chionanthus virginicus

[Synonyms : *Chionanthus pubescens*, *Chionanthus virginica*, *Chionanthus virginicus* var. *maritimus*]

FRINGE TREE is a deciduous shrub or tree. Native to south-eastern North America (from Pennsylvania to Florida and Texas) it has small fragrant, fringe-like, purple dotted inside at the base, white flowers and leaves which turn bright yellow in Autumn.

It is also known as *Albero di neve mandrap* (Italian), American fringe tree, *Arbre de neige* (French), *Bělas viržinský* (Czech), Bridal-veil tree, *Chionanthe* (French), *Chionanthus*, *Chionanto* (Italian), *Fior di neve* (Italian), Flowering ash, *Fransenbaum* (German), Fringe tree bark, Grancey graybeard, Grand-daddy graybeard, Grandfather graybeard, Grandsir-graybeard, Gray beard tree, *Karag* (Turkish), *Kar çiç* (Turkish), Old man's beard, Old man's gray beard, Poison ash, Poison ash tree, *Schneeflockenbaum* (German), Shavings, Snowdrop tree, Snowflower, Sunflower tree, *Virginischer Schneeflockenstrauch* (German), White ash, White fringe, and White fringe tree.

Warning – the root is poisonous if overdoses are taken. It can cause sore eyes, severe headaches, nausea, wind, vomiting, black stools, slow pulse, weakness and cold perspiration.

Virginicus means 'of or from Virginia (United States)' which itself was named after the English 'Virgin Queen' Elizabeth I (1533-1603).

When in flower this tree can seem to be covered in snow.

Familiar to some of the North American Indian tribes authorities note that both the Koasati and Choctaw Indians used a bark or root decoction to wash cuts and sores or in poultices applied to them and to bruising.

Medicinally, both fresh trunk and dried root bark have been used. An infusion of bark was once used as a general tonic during recovery from a weakening illness. Herbalists also recommended it for internal use as a remedy for fevers, typhoid and liver ailments, and externally in the treatment of wounds and inflammation. Today it is still highly thought of particularly as a remedy for jaundice, liver disorders and gallstones.