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Fraxinus velutina

[Synonyms : *Fraxinus coriacea*, *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* subsp. *velutina*, *Fraxinus pistaciaefolia*, *Fraxinus velutina* subsp. *coriacea*, *Fraxinus velutina* subsp. *glabra*, *Fraxinus velutina* subsp. *toumeyii*]

VELVET ASH is a deciduous shrub or tree. Native to the south-western United States it has tiny inconspicuous yellowish-green flowers and leaflets that turn yellow in Autumn. It is also known as Arizona ash, Desert ash, Fresno, Leatherleaf ash, Modesto ash, Smooth ash, and Toumey ash.

The flowers are pollinated by wind.

Velutina means ‘velvety or covered in fine short soft erect hairs’.

The Hualapai North American Indians of Arizona used this weakish wood for making walking sticks, bows and various tools for harvesting fruit from the local cacti ranging from the giant cactus (*Carnegiea gigantea*), to the border pine (*Pinus cembroides*) or to mesquite buttons (*Lophophora williamsii*).

Early European settlers used this wood to make wagons and axe handles – and also came to associate velvet ash’s presence with a reliable source of water in the vicinity.

In dry climates it is often cultivated as a street tree.