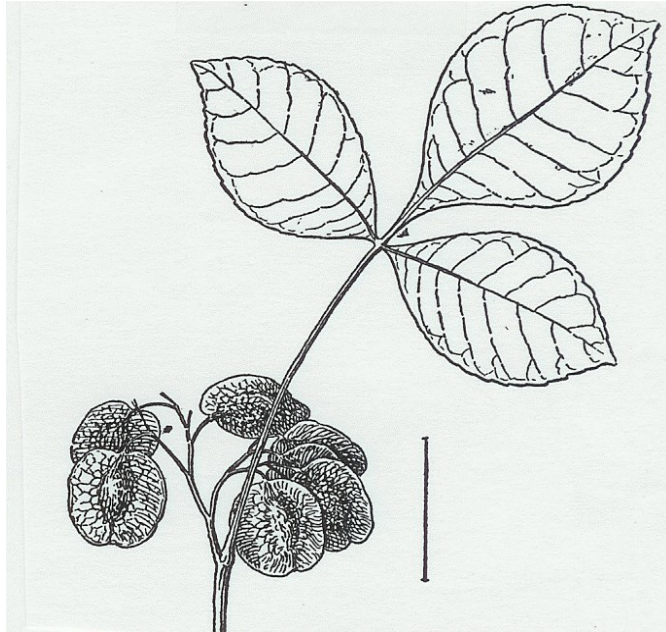


## Hoptree



The Hoptree occurs as shrubs or small trees to 20 feet (6 m) high, found scattered in southern Colorado from 5000 to 9000 feet (1500 to 2700 m) in elevation. The three-part leaf is easy to recognize. The hoptree of Colorado is not related to the hop vine of Europe whose fruit is used to flavor beer, but the clusters of papery fruit of the hoptree were used for the same purpose in the past. The fruit hangs on well into the winter. Hoptree flowers appear before the leaves. The flowers have a smell described by one author as a "sweet fragrance," by another author as an "orange odor," and by another as a "fetid odor." The bark also has a strong odor, and crushed leaves smell something like skunk. The scientific name is *Ptelea trifoliata*.

Leaves: compound, three-part, each leaflet  $\frac{3}{4}$  to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inch (18 to 65 mm) long, mostly untoothed.

Fruit: a papery disc about  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 inch (12 to 25 mm) across, with one or two seeds in the center.

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