



# Persimmon

*Diospyros virginiana*

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*Diospyros virginiana*, or Persimmon is native to southeastern Kansas and grows naturally in open areas on rocky hillsides or in alluvial soils. Heights may reach 60 feet but are typically 20 to 30 tall. It is best known for its fruit that are a favorite of wildlife and are also used for human consumption. Persimmon trees are either male or female and cannot self-pollinate. Only the female trees bare fruit.

## Leaves, Stems and Fruit

Leaves are simple, alternate, 2 to 6 inches long, and 1 to 3 inches wide. They are ovate to elliptical and are shiny green. The bark is brown to dark grey and is very deeply furrowed giving it a distinct blocky appearance. The fruit matures in September to October and is orange in color and soft when ripe. They are about 1 to 2 inches long and round.

## Use

*Wildlife Habitat* – Excellent wildlife tree. Animals of varying species love the fruit and finding fruit for human consumption may be difficult because of animal competition.

*Human Consumption* – The fruit has a very sweet taste that some say mimic the taste of dates. It can be eaten raw or made into pies, puddings, cookies and other deserts.

## Adaptation and Soil

Persimmon does best in either alluvial soils or on drier upland sites that receive adequate moisture. It is limited to the eastern one-third to possibly the eastern one-half of Kansas.

## Spacing

Space seedlings about 10 to 20 feet apart.

## Culture

One-year-old, bare-root seedlings 18 to 24 inches tall are used in plantings. They will develop faster with good weed and grass control.

## Pests

Few disease and insect problems. Rabbits and deer may be a problem as is common with any hardwood species.