

Small Shrubs (2—5')  
Deciduous

Map #79

## *Fragrant Sumac*

*(Rhus aromatica)*

Family: *Anacardiaceae*



**Leaves:** compound with 3 leaflets the terminal one of which is larger, the two side leaflets have no petioles, coarsely toothed; may be fuzzy beneath; excellent orange to red to reddish purple fall color.

**Buds:** alternate, small yellow, lightly hairy.

**Stems:** fragrant when bruised.

**Flowers:** separate male and female plants or both on one plant; male catkins are exposed in late summer through winter; females in small pyramidal clusters at the ends of branches.

**Fruits:** red, hairy, drupe (stone fruit); 1/4" each in clusters at the ends of branches in August and September.

**Habit:** low, irregular, spreading shrub 2-6' tall by 6-10' wide; lower branches turn up at the tips; suckering from roots to form dense masses.

**Culture:** fibrous roots, adaptable, full sun or half to three-quarters shade; prefers acid, well-drained soil; no serious pests or problems.

**Cultivars:** 'Gro-low' - 2' tall spreading 6-8' as a groundcover; glossy green leaves that turn a good orange-red in fall.

### **Related species:**

**Staghorn Sumac (*Rhus typhina*)** - 15-25' shrub or small tree, with gaunt, irregular branches, flat-topped with winter stems resembling stags' horns giving it a lot of character; spreads extensively by vigorous rootsuckers developing large colonies; for naturalized areas, not for use as a single specimen, foundation planting or in containers.

Leaves: compound, 1—2' long with 13—27 leaflets, serrated margins, bright green and smooth on top, hairy beneath when young, leaf out late, fall color excellent yellow-orange-scarlet. Stems: stout, rounded, densely velvety hairy, aromatic when crushed.

Flowers: male & female plants, flowers greenish yellow in June and July, female 4-8" long dense pyramidal terminal clusters. Fruit: densely hairy drupe (stone fruit) in terminal clusters in late August and persisting until April; bright red in fall becoming dark and brown through winter. Culture: well-drained and tolerant of very dry sites; Verticillium wilt common.

'Laciniata' or 'Dissecta' - confused in the trade; both with very finely and deeply cut foliage; superior fall color. 'Tiger Eyes' - released in 2004; the deeply cut, lacey leaves emerge chartreuse with red veins, changing to bright yellow throughout the summer, even in full sun; fall—scarlet-orange layered over yellow; stems fuzzy, purplish, pink; leaves upright with drooping tips.



'Gro-low' Fragrant Sumac



Staghorn Sumac



Tiger Eyes Staghorn Sumac

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