SWAMP POST OAK
Quercus similis Ashe
Synonyms: none
Family: Fagaceae (beech)
FNAI Ranks: G4/S1
Legal Status: US-none FL-none
Wetland Status: US-FACW+ FL-FACW

Trunk of mature *Quercus similis.*

Field Description: Trees, deciduous, to 25 m, with single straight trunk. **Bark** brown, scaly. **Twigs** grayish, 2-3 mm diam., persistently tomentulose. **Buds** brown, ovoid, 2-3 mm, apex acute or rounded, proximally pubescent. **Leaves**: petiole 3-10 mm. **Leaf** blade obovate or narrowly obovate, (50-)75-120(-150) × 50-65(-80) mm, base rounded-attenuate or acute, margins flat, shallowly 2-3-lobed on each side, lobes usually simple, oblong or rounded, rarely spatulate, not cruciform, secondary veins 3-5 on each side, apex broadly ovate or acute; surfaces abaxially grayish, sparsely glandular and sparsely appressed-stellate, adaxially dark green, glossy, sparsely stellate. **Acorns** 1-3, subsessile; cup 6-7 mm deep × 10-13 mm wide, scales closely appressed, grayish, finely tomentulose; nut light brown or dark reddish brown, ovoid or oblong, 12-16 × 8-12 mm, puberulent or glabrate.

Similar Species: Two other oak species are similar, albeit they occur in upland pine woodlands and sandhill. Sand post oak (*Quercus margaretiae*) is a small to

medium-sized tree with woody twigs of the season glabrous or with scattered, deciduous 2-forked hairs; petioles of mature leaves 3-10 (-15) mm long; leaf blades (2.5-) 4-8 (-13.5) cm long, irregularly and often rather shallowly 3-5 (-7) lobed, the overall form of the leaf only rarely cruciform; largest lateral lobes usually at the midpoint of the blade (or even below it), the lobes usually not sublobed, tapering from base to tip. Post oak (*Quercus stellata*) is a large tree characterized by woody twigs of the season densely and persistently stellate-pubescent, especially toward the tip of the twig; petioles of mature leaves 15-20 mm long; leaf blades (5-) 7.5-15 (-20) cm long, usually 5-lobed, the overall form of the leaf typically cruciform; the largest lateral lobes often sublobed or squarish in shape, usually wider near their tips than at their bases, and borne at right angles to the midrib; upper leaf blade surface glabrous (Weakley et al. 2023).

Related Rare Species: The tree is quite distinctive within its bottomland forest habitat. The only other oak species that it would be confused with are post oak (*Quercus stellata*) and sand post oak (*Quercus margaretiae*), both of which grow in upland pine woodlands or rich sandhills.

Habitat: Hardwood flatwoods and bottomland hardwood forests, especially over calcareous or subcalcareous substrates.

Best Survey Season: Flowering March-April, fruiting Sept.-Nov.

Range-wide Distribution: SC south to GA, west to e. TX; disjunct in c. TN. (Recently discovered in Leon Co., FL).

Conservation Status: The species is protected on Lake Talquin State Forest, where it is no longer subject to the threat of forestry operations.

Protection and Management: Protect the bottomland forest habitat where the species occurs and continue invasive plant species management.

References: Flora of North America (FNA) 1997, NatureServe 2024, Weakley, A. S. and the Southeastern Flora Team 2023.

Acorns of *Quercus similis.*