The pale yellow to cream colored buckeye flowers grow in loose clusters six to eight inches high.

The large buckeye buds are not sticky.

Bark breaks into flakes on flat scales.

The compound leaves consist of 5 to 7 leaflets that spread out like the fingers of a hand.

Ohio

the buckeye state

How did a tree nut as hard as a rock and bitter tasting to man, yet renowned as a good luck charm and cure for rheumatism become the nickname of Ohio? It just turned out that way.
Why is Ohio known as the Buckeye State and why are Ohioans known as “Buckeyes?”

An imposing procession, headed by the high sheriff Col. Ebenezer Sproat marched in Campus Martius Hall to open the first court in the Northwest Territory. Col. Sproat, large and well-proportioned, made a commanding appearance with his drawn sword.

He greatly impressed the Indians. In admiration, they dubbed him “Hetuch,” their name for the eye of the buck deer. The nickname stuck and Col. Sproat became familiarly known as “Big Buckeye.” Later the name was passed on to other Ohioans and eventually to the state.

Another commonly accepted explanation is that the nickname refers to the large number of buckeye trees native to Ohio. However, all accounts generally agree that the name of the buckeye originated from its close resemblance to the eye of the buck deer.

In 1840, Gen. William Henry Harrison was elected President of the United States. During his campaign, buckeye wood cabins and buckeye walking sticks became emblems of Ohio’s first citizen to win the highest office in the land. This forever set Ohioans apart as “Buckeyes.” While for many years the Ohio buckeye was considered the state tree of Ohio, the designation was unofficial until 1953, when the Ohio Legislature adopted the buckeye as the official tree.

The buckeye has considerable folklore. It is renowned for its mystical qualities. Some people carry it as a good luck charm and prefer it to a left hind rabbit’s foot or a four-leaf clover. Others use it as an amulet and make vast claims for its ability to cure rheumatism and a wide variety of other ailments.

In any case, if you can say you are a “Buckeye,” you are an Ohioan and your heritage is something to be proud of.

The Ohio buckeye tree is usually found along streams and on fertile bottom lands. The full grown tree is of medium size, seldom exceeding 24 inches in diameter and 60 feet in height. A notable exception is the national champion Ohio buckeye which is located on the Fred Russel farm in Athens County; it is 116 feet high, has a circumference of 8 feet, 10 inches, and a spread of 56 feet. The buckeye tree leaves, which open in early spring, have five leaflets four to six inches in length, attached at a common point to a long stem.

Two species of the buckeye tree are native to Ohio. The Ohio buckeye (Aesculus glabra) is the official state tree. The second species is the yellow buckeye (Aesculus octandra).

The two species are very similar and difficult to distinguish. They can most easily be differentiated by the nut hull. The hull of the Ohio buckeye is warty, while the hull of the yellow buckeye is smooth. Often confused with the buckeye is Aesculus hippocastanum, commonly known as the horse chestnut. It is an imported relative that has frequently been planted as an ornamental. However, the horse chestnut usually has seven leaflets, while the true buckeye generally has five.

Buckeye wood is light and easily worked, and resists splitting. One important use is in the manufacture of artificial limbs. It is quite similar to and often used in place of basswood or linden for woodenware.

The buckeye nut is bitter and, if eaten in quantity, is poisonous to man. The poisonous quality apparently does not affect squirrels, which will eat the nuts in the absence of more desirable food.
Today there are businesses, products, associations, clubs, and sports teams of all kinds, notably the Ohio State University football, basketball and their other athletic teams, associated with the name "Buckeyes". No other state has a nickname so commonly used by others with affection and so proudly accepted by its own people.

The fruit of the Buckeye Tree was at one time greatly admired by Indian tribes that roamed the Ohio region. They are credited with giving the Buckeye its present name because they thought the mahogany-colored fruit, with its peculiar cream-colored spot, looked like the eye of a buck deer.

Although it was not until 1953 that the Ohio Legislature established the Ohio Buckeye as the official tree of the State of Ohio, traditionally it has been recognized as such for many years. Ohio's redmen were the first to refer to selected Ohioans as "buckeyes" — a reference originally made to certain brave warriors who, by outstanding prowess or accomplishment, had won the respect of their chiefs.

Ohio's Buckeye Trees were also admired by early settlers. From the very first, the tree was their friend. It was most easily cleared from the land and, because of the softness and lightness of its wood, the first cabins could be rapidly built. Because they could so easily be carved from the soft Buckeye logs, babies' cradles, household trays, spoons and bowls were soon added to the furnishings of the early homes. The fact that Buckeye wood burned slowly made it excellent for use as backlogs in the cabin fireplace. Because wood from the Buckeye Tree is light in weight, easily worked, and resists splitting it is still used for a variety of products and particularly in the production of artificial limbs.

In 1788, Indians are said to have applied the name "Hetuck" — meaning "big buckeye" — to Colonel Ebenezer Sproat, a tall, impressive Ohioan who appeared in Marietta as a sheriff for the first session of court held in the Northwest Territory. In a speech given in 1833 by American General William Harrison (who later became the ninth president of the U. S. A.), the name "buckeye" was used several times in describing a special group of Ohio soldiers who had conquered a superior number of British troops and Indians during the War of 1812.

It was during the presidential campaign of 1840 that the term "Buckeye" came into common usage. Supporters of General William Henry Harrison, the Whig candidate, built log cabins of buckeye logs, erected them on wagons and hauled them to political rallies. Canes made of buckeye wood were manufactured by the hundreds and were sold to be carried in parades.

A typical Buckeye Tree is of medium size, with average height ranging between 20 and 35 feet. The leaves of the Buckeye Tree are distinctive in shape, in that each is composed of five leaflets, broadest at about the middle and varying in length from 4 to 6 inches. But the most familiar feature of all is the bright, shiny, mahogany-colored fruit with its cream-colored center under a thick, prickly, capsule-like outer covering.

We are proud of our "Buckeye" name and have adapted the leaves, fruit and stem of the Ohio Buckeye Tree as our identifying symbol. We are even more proud of our identification with the Ohio State University. Distinguished alumni of the University serve on our Board of Directors. Our officers and many of our staff members are graduates. Alumni, alumnae and former students are our valued customers and friends.
Ohio Buckeye
OHIO BUCKEYE
(AESCULUS GLABRA)
THE WONDERFUL BUCKEYE

Consider the wonderful Buckeye. From the acorn comes the oak tree. From this brown nut comes the Ohio Buckeye tree. André Michaux, who in about 1790 gave it that name, said the tree, with its soft white wood, was wholly useless but he was not thinking with the mind of the early Ohio settler, who saw in the Ohio Buckeye a true and helpful friend.

Where the Ohio Buckeye stood, the land was sure to be fertile. With it grew the sugar maple, that source of sweetening so needed by pioneer families. The softness of the wood, deplored by Michaux, made it ideal for countless purposes. When trees were felled for land clearing, the buckeye did not blunt or break the axe, as hard wood was wont to do. It could be whittled easily. From the wood came plates, trays, cradles, troughs, trenchers, noggins, spoons and household bowls.

The logs, moreover, when used in cabin walls, tended to stop the rifle bullets of unfriendly Indians and, because they burned so slowly, made the ideal backlog for the fireplace. When burned, the wood gave unusual quantities of alkali. The buckeye fiber was made into hats, the inner covering of the nut was used as a medicine against the ague and the fever and, when grated, was a usable soap. No wonder the Ohio Buckeye tree was regarded so highly by all who knew its uses.

During the presidential campaign of William Henry Harrison in 1840, the Buckeye cabin appeared as a party sign and it was then that the term Buckeye State came into being.

And nowadays? Now, we prize the Buckeye as the symbol of the State of Ohio. Its leaves and flowers, appearing early, tell us that Spring is at hand. A buckeye in the pocket, many will tell you, not only brings the bearer good fortune but wards off rheumatism. Try one in your pocket and see.

Dorothy Carter Snow (Mrs. Royall)
Chapter V, Ohio

September, 1963
IN THE FAMILY

Our Buckeye Leaf Symbol

I SUPPOSE THAT IF YOU EVER think about things like this you may have wondered, say, while shaving or powdering, why this University doesn’t have a mascot or symbol like the Michigan Wolverine, the Northwestern Wildcat or the Yale Bulldog. Certainly we’re as fierce as most of ‘em, ain’t we? Already this fall we have scratched a Panther, taloned a Hawkeye and dug up a bevy, herd or pack of Gophers. We were, however, stung by a Mustang which was more or less a horse on us, but that’s beside the point.

Various segments of the student and alumni body have from time to time probed this matter only to come slinking away bewitched, bothered and bewildered by the complexity of it all. The December, 1930 issue of The MONTHLY recounts a long and raucous deliberation of a Student Senate committee on this question. It was written by Earl Wilson, ‘31, then a columnist for this magazine; now a moderately successful pundit out of New York for several hundred daily publications of lesser significance. He showed promise even then, for his write-up is a scream. I quote:

DISAGREEMENT OVER whether an Ohio ram, even when aroused, can be as ferocious and aggravating as a normal-tempered deer, moose or elk, has left a Student Senate committee torn with dissension that any immediate answer to its quest for a new Ohio State symbol cannot be expected. “The name, ‘Buckeye’ does not indicate aggressiveness,” declared Edwin L. Schoenleb, Maryville, editor of the Lantern. The committee agreed that “Buckeye” is so distinctive and so well understood that discarding it would be folly. So they decided what they really needed is a definite symbol of “Buck.” Nick Manula, Clinton, Pa., Lantern sports editor suggested that a horse be selected. Herbert W. Decker, Columbus, Varsity “O” cheerleader favored accepting a male sheep that had been offered by an Ohio farmer. “A sheep doesn’t look fierce enough,” complained Manula, “what you got to have is something with antlers. Somebody on the coaches must have seen a buck sheep reported that, when aged, rams have longer antler-looking horns. “Yeah, but a deer is more majestic.” Manula retaliated. Frank Smith, Columbus, thought a dollar bill would make an awfully nice symbol, but didn’t know any farmers who wanted to give this kind of buck. Al Phillips, Saudsky, Sun Dial editor, wanted to construct a mechanical Buckeye, which could be rolled down the football field between halves. Decker returned to the old argument suggesting that a ram was easy to replace.

whereas an elk or moose was generally at the lodge playing poker or going to a brother’s funeral. "Too unreliable,” everybody agreed.

After one or two meetings, the Senate committee agreed to let the matter rest for awhile, as who wouldn’t? And there the matter has lain for lo these 20 years.

Now, seriously, in 1950 has come a sensible and, those here in authority believe, a workable solution to the proposal of a symbol. It came from Milton Caniff, ‘30, celebrated comic strip artist and a devoted alumnus, and it has now had the endorsement of the Athletic Board and the University Board of Trustees.

WROTE MILT: “The term ‘Buckeyes’ has quite naturally affixed itself to the Ohio State teams in all sports, to the satisfaction of everyone except those who must devise some unique, graphic identification for uniforms, equipment, flags and stationery. On the basis of the use the Canadians have made of the Maple Leaf as a symbol of their entire nation and some of their teams, the five-pointed Buckeye Leaf is suggested as a distinctive device for Ohio State. Not only is the Ohio Buckeye Tree identified with our state, but the leaf is a graceful representation of its towering strength. Already in use as a part of the Great Seal of the University, the Scarlet Leaf could be adopted for use on athletic uniforms, band equipment such as drums and could be used on flags, stationery and equipment.”

His presentation grew poetical, almost:

“Strong as the tree are the sons and daughters of Ohio, who have grown under its sheltering branches, cooled by its summer shade and warmed by its wood in the hearth fires of Ohio winters. The great undergraduate and alumni bodies of the University are for the most part as native to the mother state as the tree itself. As trunks of the Buckeye tree grow straight from the rich soil of the 88 counties, so do Ohio State’s men and women, everywhere affectionately termed as ‘Buckeyes.’”

First visible sign of the symbol you have already seen on this page of The MONTHLY, last month and this,—as drawn by Milt, himself, for us. The device is a leaf of the Ohio Buckeye (Aesculus Glabra) Tree, Scarlet in color, displayed against a background of gray, to embody the Ohio State University colors. The stem curves gracefully to the viewer’s right, like the fingers of an open hand.

As Prof. Adolph E. Waller, department of Botany, and a member of the

Ohio Buckeye (Aesculus Glabra)

DRAWING by Milton Caniff

Faculty Committee on Portraits and Memorials, put it.

“Many early Ohio boys grew up in a Buckeye cabin, and ate their porridge from a Buckeye bowl. Not only had they come to know the tree from frequent encounters in clearing the land, but it was used in their home and household utensils. Johnny cake was baked in the ashes of an open fireplace on Buckeye boards. The venison trough, the big white family bowl for mush and milk were carved from the soft wood of the Buckeye. Thus, beyond the trees of the land, the Buckeye was associated with the family circle. The five leaflets of the blade of the leaf, according to one historian, became ‘an expressive symbol of a hand extended in fellowship.’”

SOON, WE BELIEVE, you will see the Buckeye Leaf symbol cropping out everywhere. Our magnificent Marching Band will soon be wearing
new shoulder patches on their uniforms featuring the Scarlet Leaf on a gray background. Mr. Whitcomb, director of the band, and his assistant, Jack Evans, will use the Buckeye as the theme for their Homecoming show and also are working on a Buckeye Leaf formation. Athletic Director Dick Larkins has asked Trainer Ernie Biggs about putting it on football helmets, warm up jerseys, swimmers' trunks, the sleeves of baseball uniforms, track shirts, etc.

Vice President Taylor, commissioned by the Board of Trustees to produce a new official flag has referred the working out of the design to the Committee on Portraits and Memorials, headed by University Architect Howard Dwight Smith and they are now corresponding with Mr. Caniff about incorporating the Leaf into the design. The Great Seal of the University may even be re-done to give the Leaf a more prominent place.

The matter has the enthusiastic endorsement of President Bevis who has given the "go-ahead" for universal use of the symbol.

AND SO, AFTER YEARS of inquiry and speculation, 'we Buckeyes will still remain Buckeyes, flora instead of fauna, but just as deadly on the playing fields as we are generally friendly in nature and demeanor. Yea, Ohio! Yea, Buckeye Tree! Yea, Aesculus Glabra! Yea, Buckeyes, one and all!

Now let's hear from you on this subject.

Cordially,
WHY IS OHIO CALLED THE BUCKEYE STATE?

This sobriquet has been given two derivations. The usual and most commonly accepted solution is that it originates from the buckeye tree which is indigenous to the State of Ohio and is not found to any extent elsewhere and only in a very restricted region about Ohio and contiguous territory. By the Indians the buckeye was called "Hetuck", meaning the eye of the buck, because of the striking resemblance of the seed both in color, shape and appearance to the eye of the buck.Persons who do not know the buckeye, Aesculus Ohioensis, frequently confuse it with the horse chestnut, but there are several distinct differences between the two trees. The Ohio buckeye tree has only five segments to its leaf whereas the horse chestnut has seven when fully developed (undeveloped horse chestnut leaves may have four, five or six segments). The buckeye leaves are much smaller and not so ornate as those of the horse chestnut. The buckeye tree is not as symmetrical nor beautifully formed as the horse chestnut and it frequently grows to a much greater height. The flowers of the buckeye are greenish or yellow and are not showy like those of the horse chestnut. The wood of the buckeye is light and soft and easily worked, hence it was used to a considerable extent by early settlers for building purposes, although it did not have very lasting qualities. A second derivation has been brought forward for the sobriquet, buckeye, to the effect that at the opening of the first court in the Northwest Territory, September 2nd, 1788, a rather imposing procession was formed which marched to Campus Martius Hall at Marietta. The procession was headed by the high sheriff with drawn sword. He was Col. Ebenezer Sproat. The ceremony greatly impressed the Indians and especially did the high sheriff with his sword catch their savage fancy. He was over six feet tall and well proportioned and altogether made a very commanding appearance. The Indians dubbed him "Hetuck", or "Big Buckeye". It was not spoken in derision but in greatest admiration. The sobriquet stuck, and Sproat became familiarly known to his associates as "Big Buckeye". Later the name was passed on to other Ohioans.

The sobriquet, whatever its source, was not crystallized until the presidential campaign of 1840 when General William Henry Harrison was a candidate for President. In that campaign, buckeye cabins and buckeye walking sticks became emblems of Ohio's first citizen to try for the highest office in the land. It was this which forever set Ohioans apart as "buckeyes".

Source: (q.v. Vol XXIX pg. 275 Ohio Historical Publications and Howe's Collections Vol. I, pg. 201.)
Buckeye Ohio

Proud to be a Buckeye is a familiar phrase on the campus of Ohio State University. Not many who use the nickname know how it grew. For outsiders it is often a puzzle. A sports writer in Pasadena last December took a poll and had quite a list of varying answers to his question "What's a Buckeye?" A vegetable, the eye of a buck, a kind of chestnut, an early day pioneer, a flower worn in a lapel, were in his list. The hungriest had opined it was a kind of pancake like buckwheat. The dictionary says "any of several shrubs and trees resembling the horse chestnut of the genus Hesculus". This is still a long way from the admiring epethet buckeye applied to a person or to the State flanked on the north by Lake Erie and on the south by the Beautiful River.

Early travelers along the Ohio and tributary rivers had seen the buckeye and even called it the Ohio. In the undisturbed river bottoms and lower slopes it sometimes grew to great size. But it never was confined to Ohio exclusively. And there were early travelers who knew. Perhaps the most famous of these were the botanically trained Michaux, father and son. The elder Michaux established two nurseries to collect trees and shrubs for the French Government. The younger one in 1802 made a voyage west of the Alleghany Mountains that makes pretty good reading today.

Dr. Samuel Hildreth, distinguished citizen of the early days of Marietta has left an account of how the handsome big buckeye was personified. At the opening of the first court of the Northwest Territory with fitting ceremony, Col. Ebenezer Sproat acted as Marshal and led the parade. Indian spectators who gazed approvingly at Col. Sproat's uniform and handsome physique called him "he-tuck" which in their language meant "big buckeye".
The nickname caught on and was evidently applied to others.

In 1840 in a political campaign a log cabin brought from Union County was paraded in Columbus. It was built of buckeye logs in the old fashion. There was also a song used in the campaign in praise of the buckeye log cabin in the Buckeye State. By this time the name had evidently come into widespread use as a nickname for Ohio.

In the intervening period how often it was used and where it had first been used is not too certain. Fortunately one prominent citizen used the name frequently and is credited with having made its use state wide. He is Dr. Daniel Drake of Cincinnati. The occasion that is most likely to have resulted in the adoption of the nickname was the Buckeye dinner held December 26, 1833 to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the founding of Cincinnati. General Harrison, popular hero of the west, and soon to be elected President of the United States was present at the dinner. So also were Peyton S. Symmes and Joseph Longworth. Edward King read stanzas composed for the event by Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz praising the pioneers who by science, genius, taste had transmuted the "uncultured waste".

Dr. Drake spoke on the Buckeye Tree. He told how as a boy in the vicinity of Mayslick, Kentucky just across the river he had helped his father clear the forests to make a patch of cultivable land. He had grown up in a buckeye cabin and eaten his porridge from a buckeye bowl. Not only had he come to know the tree from frequent encounter in the woods but it was his home and familiar household utensil. At the time of the Buckeye dinner utensils made of glass, metals or pottery replaced the wooden bowls of the pioneer. Johnny cake once was baked in the ashes of an open fireplace on buckeye boards, the venison treacher, the big white family bowl
for mush and milk were carved from the soft wood of the buckeye. He said "the finest 'boughten' vessel could not have imported a more delicious flavor or left an impression so enduring". He who has ever been concerned in the petty brawls, the frolic and the fun of a family of young Buckeyes around the great wooden bowl over flowing with the milk of human kindness will carry the sweet remembrance to the grave.

Thus beyond all the trees of the land the buckeye was associated with the family circle. The five leaflets of the blade of the leaf he said became an expressive symbol of a hand extended in fellowship.

On many other occasions Dr. Drake made use of the idea of hospitality in the Buckeye Bowl. At his home he was fond of assembling friends the prominent citizens of Cincinnati and serving what he called sangaree. It was a fruit punch spiced, sweetened, alcohol free as he was a temperance advocate. In season buckeye blossoms and branches would be placed over the buckeye bowl from which the punch was ladled and corn bread and corn cake would be placed on the table. They were simple items but furnished the opportunity for many a pleasant speech on the cheerful spirit and the warm hospitality of the west. Although he was at that time one of Cincinnati's most distinguished men he still preserved the pioneer spirit.

RECEIVED
OCT 24 1950
UNIVERSITY ARCHITECT
WANTED • A Symbol • Says Student Senate

Committee Named to Discover Means of Dramatizing the Name, "Buckeyes"

“Pitt,” the Pittsburg Panther, whose antics at the Stadium Nov. 15 delighted the crowd and probably stimulated the imagination of the Ohio State student body.

Frank Smith, Columbus, thought a dollar bill would make an awfully nice symbol for “Buck” but he doubted whether any farmer would want to loan the University any of that species.

MECHANICAL BUCKEYE

CONSIDERING the “Buckeye” symbol for the first time, Al Philby, Sandusky, Sun Dial editor, wanted to construct a mechanical buckeye which could be rolled down the football field between halves.

“Better yet,” he said, “a treadmill arrangement could be built inside and it could wobble down the field alone and without any evident means of locomotion, thus giving the spectators a big laugh,” he said. “After all, this is the Buckeye state,” he scolded the committee.

“By the way,” he added, “are there any Buckeye trees on the campus?” and when everybody looked doubtful, Decker ventured that a buckeye tree be planted at football games as appropriate of something. The trouble with this, he admitted, is that buckeye trees grow too slowly, much slower than a ram or a moose, for example.

“A ram is so easy to replace,” said Decker, returning to his old argument. “You can get a ram at any farm house, but you can’t find an elk or moose anywhere. They’re always supposed to be busy at the office, but from a woman next door I understand they’re usually at the lodge playing poker or going to a brother’s funeral, or holding a golf tournament in the locker room at the country club, or attending a convention. Oh, they would be too unreliable.”

This naturally brought up the question of whether Tony Aquila would allow a ram to run loose in the Stadium, considering all the toil he has spent in keeping the grass in good shape there.

After one or two meetings, the Senate committee decided to keep the name “Buckeyes” and to let the question of the selection of a symbol rise for awhile.

EARL WILSON, ’30.
OHIO'S
OFFICIAL SYMBOLS

Their History and Significance

by
Margaret G. Hatch

THE OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
COLUMBUS, OHIO
1968
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Buckeye.” The sobriquet stuck, and thereafter he was jocularly known as Hetuck Sproat among his friends. All residents of the Ohio Valley were soon given the name Buckeye by travelers.

The man most responsible for establishing the nickname for the state and her people was one of the shrewdest promoters Ohio has ever known, Dr. Daniel Drake of Cincinnati. Dr. Drake, physician, educator, booster and propagandizer, along with some other young men of the Queen City, decided to hold a “Buckeye Dinner” on Christmas Day, 1833. Only native Ohioans were invited; toasts were drunk only in native wine. The celebration was to commemorate such important historical events as the settlement of Cincinnati. Dr. Drake was the featured speaker.

The memorable Drake address was about the buckeye. He pleaded that hereafter the name of derision should be transformed to one of pride. He explained how the Ohio buckeye was far more than an ill-smelling tree; being, rather, the species selected by pioneers for their first log cabins because of the softness of the wood, yet it was well able to arrest the Indian’s rifle bullet. He told how the buckeye fruit resembled the eye of the buck deer, noblest part of a noble creature, thus giving it its name; how the first cradles of our native sons were buckeye troughs in which they were rocked to sleep. He told how hats were made of its fibers; how Johnny-cake was prepared in buckeye wood trays; how the pioneer table was set with buckeye spoons, bowls, and vessels; how long-lasting “back-fires” were built of green buckeye logs to heat cabins throughout the night; how militiamen formed teams and bombarded each other with buckeyes to keep alert; how the inner covering of the nut was a soap substitute; and how, in spite of repeated, deep girdling, the buckeye tree was slow to die.

From the very beginning of the state itself, Ohioans have been dubbed Buckeyes. In the early years, however, the nickname was one of derision synonymous to “hick” or “rube,” and our forefathers were often insulted by the epithet.

Samuel P. Hildreth, of Marietta, an early Ohio historian, related that when the first court in the Northwest Territory was held on September 2, 1788, in his town, a procession was formed. Leading the parade of public officials and jurists with drawn sword was the high sheriff, Ebenezer Sproat. Indian bystanders were so impressed with the commanding appearance of the six-foot-tall sheriff that they called him “Hetuck,” “Big
Dr. Drake’s dramatic presentation was enthusiastically received. The influential *Western Monthly Magazine* printed the speech in full in 1834. Buckeye celebrations were held throughout the state. One in Hamilton on September 30, 1835, defined, in its invitations, a native Buckeye to be “...all who immigrated to this state under the age of five years, and all persons residents of Ohio previous to the adoption of the constitution of the state. ...” At the meeting “The Buckeye Tree,” a song by Dennis McHenry, was lustily sung.

The narrow definition of a Buckeye was soon dropped. All who made their homes in the state could qualify as true Buckeyes, for Ohio was infected with buckeye-mania. Newark and other towns held Buckeye Balls. On the Fourth of July, boys threw buckeyes into bonfires to hear them pop. In Columbus, during April 1839, a newspaper called *The Buckeye Whig* was founded, the first publication to carry the name.

But it was not until the presidential campaign of 1840 that Ohio became nationally known as the Buckeye State and its citizens as Buckeyes. William Henry Harrison, running on the Whig ticket for president, was derided in a Democratic Baltimore, Maryland, newspaper as a man better fitted to sit in a log cabin and drink hard cider, than rule in the White House. The intended slur was turned to their advantage by the Whigs, and the Log Cabin and Hard Cider Campaign was launched. In Ohio, buckeye log cabins were built on wagons (the first at Marysville) and hauled from town to town by oxen as portable campaign headquarters. Songs were written and sung across the land about the Buckeye candidate:

Hurrah for the father of the Great West
For the Buckeye who follows the plough.

Tom Corwin, running for governor in 1840, called himself the “Buckeye Boy,” although he was 46. The manufacture of buckeye canes and strings of buckeye beads for the ladies boomed. From that time forward, there was no doubt who a Buckeye was. Yet not until the state’s 150th anniversary in 1953 did the Ohio buckeye become the official state tree.

The Ohio Buckeye (*Aesculus glabra*) is one of three species of buckeye found in the region. One, the sweet or yellow buckeye (*Aesculus octandra*) is found only in the southeastern Ohio counties and along the Ohio River. The horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) is found all over the state. The Ohio buckeye, our state tree, is native to the glaciated sections of the state.

It is easy to identify the Ohio buckeye. Each leaf is usually composed of five leaflets with finely serrated margins. Each leaflet has its greatest width at its center. Its flowers are greenish-yellow with four petals each. The horse chestnut usually has seven-fingered leaves, each leaflet having its greatest width beyond the center and being abruptly pointed. The horse chestnut’s flowers are showy and marked with red. The sweet buckeye’s flowers are yellow or in part reddish or reddish purple with four petals each.

So popular is the name buckeye that manufacturing firms, banking houses, hotels, and a great variety of merchandising and services, are distinguished by the name. The 1967 Columbus telephone directory, for example, enumerates nearly 100 “Buckeye” listings, including a mortuary supply house and an overhead door service. So interwoven is the history of the people of Ohio with this particular tree that, beautiful or ugly, sweet-smelling or foul, the Ohio buckeye as a state symbol is here to stay.
BUCKEYES

THE PROUD appellation "Buckeye" is no Johnny-come-lately to Ohio. The first known time an Ohioan was dubbed "Buckeye" was Sept. 2, 1788, in Marietta, during a procession honoring the opening of the first court in the Northwest Territory. Leading the parade was the settlement's high sheriff carrying drawn sword, followed, in order, by citizens, officers of the Fort Harmar garrison, members of the bar, supreme judges, the governor, clergymen, and the newly appointed judges of the Court of Common Pleas.

Among the spectators at this splendid occasion was a large band of Indians, there to make treaty with the whites. Ever fond of ceremony, the Indians were much impressed by the grand event: They were especially impressed by the high sheriff at the head of the parade, Col. Ebenezer Sproat. His great height—over six feet—and dignified bearing inspired their highest admiration, which they voiced by calling him, in their language, "Hetuck," or "Big Buckeye."

A half-century later, during the heated presidential campaign of 1840, the nickname was revived. William Henry Harrison's opponents, who viewed him as a rough-hewn old boy, derided the candidate as "better fitted to sit in a log-cabin and drink hard cider, than rule in the White House." Harrison's supporters immediately picked up the image and transformed it into a triumphant series of campaign slogans and songs lauding cabins raised of buckeye logs and cheering the "Buckeye Boys" who worked their plows near "the Bonnie buckeye shade." It has been a
part of the American language ever since.

Indians and Harrison supporters have not been alone in their esteem of the buckeye tree and its handsome, though inedible, fruits. The first settlers early came to appreciate its virtues—and to make good use of them. Though it is found in some other places, the buckeye’s natural home appears to be in the rich valleys of various Ohio rivers.

In 1847, the tree was eulogized by Dr. Daniel Drake, botanist and historian, in a speech delivered in Cincinnati on the occasion of the state’s 44th anniversary, from which the following excerpts are taken. Let all persons who proudly bear the name Buckeye, and who further rejoice in the victories of Woody Hayes’ gladiators in autumnal arenas, take note:

Every native of the valley of the Ohio should feel proud of the appellation, which, from the infancy of our settlements, has been conferred upon him, for the buckeye has many qualities which may be regarded as typical of a noble character.

It is not merely a native of the West, but peculiar to it; has received from the botanists the specific name of Ohioensis, from its abundance in our beautiful valley; and is the only tree of our whole forest that does not grow elsewhere. What other tree could be so fit an emblem of our native population?

From the very beginning of emigration it has been a friend to the newcomers. Delighting in the richest soils, they soon learned to take counsel from it in the selection of their lands; and it never yet proved faithless to any one who confided in it.

When the first log-cabin was to be hastily put up, the softness and lightness of its wood made it precious; for in those times laborers were few and axes once broken in hard timber could not be repaired. It was, moreover, of all the trees of the forest, that which best arrested the rifle-bullets of the Indian.

When the infant Buckeyes came forth, to render these solitary cabins vocal, and make them instinct with life, cradles were necessary, and they could not be so easily dug out of any other tree. Thousands of men and women, who are now active and respectable performers on the great theatre of Western society, were once rocked in buckeye troughs.

Hats were manufactured of its fibres—the tray for the delicious "pone" and "Johnny-cake," the venison trencher, the noggin, the spoon, and the huge white family bowl for mush and milk, were carved from its willing trunk.

The buckeye has generally been condemned as unfit for fuel, but its very incombustibility has been found an advantage, for no tree of the forest is equally valuable for "backlogs," which are the sine qua non of every good cabin fire. Thus treated, it may be finally, though slowly, burnt.

The nut is undeniably the most beautiful of all which our teeming woods bring forth; and in many parts of the country is made subservient to the military education of our sons who, assembling in the "musterfield" (where their fathers and elder brothers are learning to be militiamen), divide themselves into armies, and pelt each other with buckeye balls; a military exercise at least as instructive as that which their seniors perform with buckeye sticks.

The inner covering of the nut, when grated down, is soapy, and has been used to cleanse fine fabrics in the absence of good soap.

The bark of our emblem plant, under a proper method of preparation and use, is said to be very efficacious in the cure of ague and fever, but unskilfully employed, proves a violent emetic; which may indicate that he who tampers with a Buckeye will not do it with impunity.

In all our woods there is not a tree so hard to kill as the buckeye. The deepest girdling does not deaden it, and even after it is cut down and worked up into the side of a cabin it will send out young branches, deoting to all the world that Buckeyes are not easily conquered, and could with difficulty be destroyed.

Finally, the buckeye derives its name from the resemblance of its nut to the eye of the buck, the finest organ of our noblest wild animal, while the name itself is compounded of a Welsh and a Saxon word, belonging therefore to the oldest portions of our vernacular tongue, and connecting as with the primitive stocks, of which our fathers were but scions planted in the new world.

— Margie Breckenridge
OUTSTANDING IN THEIR OWN FIELD!!

The great sense of pride and support graduates of the Ohio State University have continually shown for their alma mater, has made our Alumni Association the largest organization (over 80,000 members) of its kind in the world. Thanks to you, we recently won the nation's highest honor for alumni activity, the Case (Council for Advancement and Support of Education) grand award for total alumni relations programs. We shared another grand award for exceptional achievement and overall excellence in educational advancement with OSU's Office of Public Affairs. Keep up the good work! Your Alumni Association membership means a better Ohio State.

Alumni House • 2400 Olentangy River Road • Columbus, Ohio • 432-2500
History of the State Emblems

STATE SEAL OF OHIO

Although the Great Seal of Ohio was provided for in the Constitution of 1851, it was not until March 28, 1893, that a law authorizing such a seal was passed by the Legislature. Designed by Secretary of State William Creighton and inspired by a view of the rising sun between the hills of Mount Logan as seen from the home of United States Senator Thomas Worthington, the seal contained the following device: A sheaf of wheat and a sheaf of seventeen arrows (Ohio entering the Union as the seventeenth state) with a rising sun over a mountain in the background (Ohio being the first state west of the Alleghenies). Because the law authorizing the seal was repealed in 1805, several different designs were used until 1851 when a new law was enacted. Then repealed two years later. An 1868 act re-instituted the 1803 seal design but changed the single mountain to a range of mountains. The present seal is the result of a 1967 revision.

STATE MOTTO

In 1865 Ohio officially adopted the motto "Impetrum in imperio" (An Empire within an Empire) but two years later the law was repealed because that motto was thought too royal. Effective October 1, 1952, was the present state motto "With God All Things Are Possible" taken from Matthew 19:26 and suggested by a twelve-year-old Cincinnati boy, James Mastenardo.

STATE GEMSTONE

Adopted August 24, 1965. Ohio's State Stone is Ohio Flint, a crypto-crystalline variety of quartz. The Indians used flint for arrowheads and other implements.

STATE FLAG

The first Ohio flag was created to be shown at the Ohio Building at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York, in 1901. The General Assembly officially adopted the flag the following year. Designed by John Eisenmann, the flag has three red and two white horizontal stripes (symbolizing the roads and waterways), a blue triangular field in which there are seventeen white, five-pointed stars (symbolizing Ohio's admission to the Union as the seventeenth state) grouped around a red disc on a white circle symbolizing the initial letter of the state's name.

STATE TREE

Native to the state and origin of Ohio's nickname "Buckeye State" is the buckeye tree officially adopted as the state tree on October 2, 1933. The Indians called the buckeye "Hitetuck" eye of the buck because of the resemblance of the seed to the eye of a buck. Early settlers used the wood of the buckeye tree for building.

STATE BEVERAGE

In 1965 tomato juice was officially adopted as Ohio's state beverage.

STATE FLOWER

In 1904 the General Assembly passed a resolution adopting the scarlet carnation as Ohio's official flower in memory of President William McKinley who had been assassinated in 1901. McKinley's use of the carnation as a good luck piece originated in Alliance in his 1876 campaign for United States House of Representatives. His Democratic opponent, Dr. Levi L. Lamborn, who cultivated the flowers in his greenhouse put a red carnation in McKinley's buttonhole. McKinley won the election, and in subsequent campaigns for Ohio governor and the presidency he wore a red carnation.

STATE BIRD

The red-plumed, single-crested songbird "cardinalis cardinalis" or cardinal was adopted in 1933 by the General Assembly as the official state bird.

STATE SONG

On October 24, 1905, "Beautiful Ohio" officially became Ohio's state song. Written in 1918 by Ballard MacDonald and Mary Earl, the song is about the Ohio River and the state itself.

"Beautiful Ohio"
Lyrics by Ballard MacDonald
Music by Mary Earl

Chorus:
Drifting down the current of a mountain stream
While above the heavens in their glory beam
And the stars upon high
Twinkle in the sky

Dreaming of a dream of love divine
Beautiful Ohio in dreams again I see
Visions of what used to be

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Mr. Ezra D. Simpkins
243 31st St. West
Huntington, W. Va. 25704

Dear Mr. Simpkins:

Your request for information on state and university nicknames has been referred to me for response.

Both the State of Ohio and the university's athletic teams carried the "Buckeye" designation long before official actions were taken on the name.

A publication of the Ohio Secretary of State includes the following:

"The buckeye tree which is native to Ohio gave to the State the nickname of the 'Buckeye State.' The Indians called the buckeye 'Hetuck,' meaning the eye of the buck, because of the striking resemblance of the seed, both in color, shape and appearance to the eye of the buck. Early settlers used the wood for building purposes. A law effective October 2, 1953, adopted the buckeye as Ohio's official tree."

The following is from the history of Ohio State athletics:

"Milton Caniff, '30, widely known artist and cartoonist, was responsible for designing a University emblem embodying buckeyes and buckeye leaves. The (Athletic) Board approved the idea in September, 1950, and recommended the use of the emblem wherever appropriate in connection with athletics -- for use on uniforms and for stencilling baggage equipment. It is also used by the band."

I hope the above will be of assistance to you. If I can be of further service, please let me know.

Sincerely,

William F. Rounds
Coordinator, Internal Information

WFR/nl

bcc: E. Crawford
An Electric By Any Other Name...

The name "Electrics" isn't particularly shocking to the residents of Philo, Ohio. The Philo High School sports teams have been called that for nearly 50 years.

By Alan Miller

Or What The Heck Is A Ceramic?
stencil the Hull Pottery name on the uniforms.

"Since most of the potteries produced some sort of ceramic pottery, they decided to call the team the 'Ceramics,'" Neff said.

Over the years, the Hull Pottery logo was adopted as the school emblem. It depicts a man sitting at a potter's wheel. Now, he is one of the few who still do. Ohio potteries have fallen on hard times, and only a few small operations remain in the Crooksville area.

"Tradition in sports is pretty important; so even if it doesn't fit too well anymore, they keep it," said Timothy Curry, an associate professor of sociology at Ohio State University, of the unusual nicknames. "People come to identify their teams by the name, even though it is inappropriate by today's standards."

Curry studies symbols, and team nicknames are a type of symbol.

He said it doesn't matter what the symbol means or if the people using it know its history, so long as the nickname is short, can be shouted easily and creates the desired reaction.

He said it is likely that many Ohio State University fans don't know why OSU sports teams are called the Buckeyes. Curry said he wasn't sure how they came to be named after a nut.

"I suppose it has something to do with the Buckeye being the state tree. The nut got its name because . . . it resembles a buck's eye," he said.

Records in OSU archives indicate that "Buckeyes" was used as an unofficial nickname for the state and the college from the time the first OSU football team took the field in 1890. The nickname was not officially adopted by the university until 1950, and the state legislature adopted it for the state three years later.

Some names probably should be changed, Curry said, but they won't be.

"No one has suggested changing the Buckeyes," he said. "Because of tradition, they won't be changed. A little bit of social invention is required here, but it's in short supply these days."

The people, industries and events that inspire such team nicknames as the Locomotives, Tarblooders and Magics fade away, but the names live on. They become as traditional as the games themselves.
April 13, 1988

Your inquiry about The Ohio State University (OSU) nickname was just forwarded to our office from the Sports Information Office. The OSU nickname is "Buckeyes." According to historians, Ohio may have been known as the Buckeye State and Ohioans known as "Buckeyes" as early as 1788. The buckeye tree which is native to Ohio, gave the State the nickname of the "Buckeye State." The buckeye leaf has been a part of our University Seal since 1871. A law was passed in October, 1953, adopting the buckeye as Ohio's official tree.

In 1950, Milton Caniff, artist, cartoonist, and a 1930 graduate of OSU, designed a University Emblem. It features the buckeye leaf and was to be used wherever appropriate in connection with athletics. The marching band also uses the Emblem on their uniforms. The term "Buckeyes" for the OSU teams was in use much before 1950.
Buckeyes may soon have yummy nuts
OSU profs looking to alter state tree, making leaves scarlet, too

By Tom McKee
Lantern staff writer

Two OSU professors just might be "nuts." John Finer and Ken Cochran are cloning embryos of the buckeye tree and plan to genetically alter them to produce trees with scarlet leaves and, perhaps, edible nuts. "The scarlet would make the trees stand out -- you know, the scarlet and gray, the Buckeyes and all that," said Cochran, an assistant professor at Ohio State's Agricultural Technical Institute in Wooster. Cochran also manages the Secrest Arboretum there.

Are they "nutty" professors? "That's a term," said Cochran, who handed out candy buckeyes (balls of peanut butter covered in chocolate) at a recent arboretum open house.

The buckeye tree, the state's official tree, usually lives in low spots and produces basically useless nuts enclosed in a prickly shell. The nuts are poisonous to humans. "Why not make it worthwhile?" Cochran asked.

Finer, an associate professor at the Ohio Agricultural and Research Developmental Center in Wooster, is growing the cloned embryos in a synthetic gelatin substance in a laboratory. He said the idea is to introduce a red gene into the plants when they mature in about a year.

"It could have been one of those mornings after a cup of coffee and my head was just starting to clear when I thought of it," Finer said, explaining the decision to begin the research.

"I like to play in the laboratory," he added.

Finer said a handful of rather large buckeyes on the ground caught his eye while walking on main campus last year. He later used those nuts to make the cloned embryos.

"I like the look of the nut, and, of course, we are all Buckeyes," said Finer.

The research also will focus on making the Ohio variety of the buckeye tree sterile and less sensitive to drought.

"We don't know what to do with them, but they're there," Cochran said of the buckeye.

But a buckeye cream pie? "This is pretty new stuff, and we're at the starting point," said Finer, noting that it likely will be many years before they can make the buckeye edible for humans.

Finer said he is performing the buckeye research during breaks in experiments on soybeans and corn. The soybean and corn research is funded by national commodities groups such as the National Soybean Association, he said. The buckeye research is not funded.

Cochran said the buckeye was chosen arbitrarily as Ohio State's mascot in the 1950s at the urging of Milton Caniff, an OSU alumnus and comic-strip maker.

"There's no rationale behind it. They just chose it. Now, we're saying, 'Let's see what it's worth,'" Cochran said.
What is a BUCKEYE?

Spring leaves and flowers.

A mature Buckeye tree.

Fruit husks in late Summer.

Husks peeled off to reveal BUCKEYES.

A BUCKEYE is an inedible nut which resembles the eye of a deer.
WHAT IS A BUCKEYE?

The Ohio Buckeye, Aesculus glabra, was named state tree in 1953. It derives its name from its nut, a shiny dark brown seed with a light brown center which resembles the eye of a deer. Buckeye is also the nickname of the state of Ohio and its residents.

Photos © Victory Postcards
Photo by Steve Gibson, © Terrell Publishing Co.
THE ORIGINAL OHIO BUCKEYE
The Return of the Native

The original specimen of the Ohio Buckeye, *Aesculus glabra*, grown from seeds planted by Professor C.L. Willdenow of the Berlin Botanical Garden, is pictured here. In 1809, Willdenow described the species as new to science using this particular specimen. This original Ohio Buckeye is on loan to The Ohio State University until 1990. During this time, researchers hope to delve more deeply into the history of this specimen. (Photograph by David R. Barker, Ohio Historical Society.)
This specimen, representing the symbol of The Ohio State University and the State of Ohio, survived World War II—although more than four million other specimens were destroyed.

△ Seeds were probably collected in Ohio and sent to Berlin, where they grew and flowered in the botanical garden.

△ This original Ohio Buckeye is in excellent condition, even though it is more than 180 years old.

△ This specimen is on loan to Ohio State from the Botanical Garden and Museum of West Berlin for a period of two and one-half years.

△ Although valuable historical materials are not ordinarily loaned, a special concession has been made due to the importance of this specimen to the University and the State of Ohio.

It is clear that our information about this invaluable specimen is inadequate—and the clock is ticking. We have a little less than two and one-half years to discover some vital information: exactly where the specimen was collected, who collected it, what correspondence took place between the collector and Professor Willdenow, what the relationships are of the Ohio Buckeye to related species throughout the world (especially in Asia), the history of its adoption as a state symbol, and its designation as the University mascot and symbol of Ohio State.

△ During the time the Buckeye is home, botanists plan to do research that will provide answers to some of these questions. We hope that by the end of the loan period, information can be made available on the particular significance of this specimen and details regarding its original collection, distribution, and relationships. These facts have never before been brought together and distributed to the general public.

△ Now that the original Ohio Buckeye is home for a short stay, we have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to probe our Buckeye roots.
Buckeye Pride—It Keeps on Growing

We take pleasure and pride in the Buckeye symbol in our daily lives—from Saturday afternoon football games to the use of the symbol on stationery and other memorabilia scattered throughout Columbus, the State of Ohio, and the entire country. What the Buckeye symbol means botanically and scientifically can add a more sophisticated meaning to our sense of pride in it and in who we are. We're Buckeyes!

For more information on the original Ohio Buckeye or how you might contribute to the research effort, please write or call Professor Tod Stuessy, Director, The Ohio State University Herbarium, 310 Botany & Zoology Building, 1735 Neil Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210-1293, tel. 614-292-3296.