

# Senate Bill 74:

## State Designations - State Fruit - American Persimmon

**SPONSORED BY SENATOR ARTHUR ELLIS - DISTRICT 28**



Persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*) is a species native to Maryland. The genus name, *Diospyros*, literally translates to “Fruit of the Gods,” but when unripe, the fruit can be quite distasteful! This large fruit tree can grow up to 80 feet in height and prefers partial to full shade environments. It grows best in well drained soils, but can also persist in dry or moist soils, as well as within sterile soil environments. Persimmons can be found throughout much of Maryland, aside from Garrett County.



Persimmon has simple, alternate leaves that are four to six inches long and are oval in appearance. The leaves are thick and dark green above and pale on the underside. In autumn, the leaves sometimes turn orange or scarlet in color. The bark is distinct. It is dark brown or grey in color and is divided into scaly plates.

In May and June, persimmon trees flower. The tubular flowers are yellow or creamy white in appearance. The fruit is a rounded berry that ripens in mid-late fall.

When mature, the fruit is yellow to orange in color with a waxy, pale outer coating. The edible fruits are sought after by humans and animals alike.

Ada Marciniak, 13, pictured in the tree, and her sister Josephine Marciniak, 10, standing on the ground, pick persimmons from their grandmother’s tree in Indian Head, Maryland, in Charles County. (Courtesy of Andrzej Marciniak)

Photos and information courtesy of  
<https://www.thebaltimorebanner.com/politics-power/state-government/maryland-persimmon-state-symbol-VSTRC4MFPRFTTGHUFV35JJYPQQ/> and  
<https://news.maryland.gov/dnr/2017/09/01/habichat-persimmon/>