

STAGHORN SUMAC

Rhus typhina

Also called Fuzzy Sumac or Velvet Sumac. It is a deciduous shrub which can occasionally be a small tree of 10-15 feet (and a maximum of 61'). The crown is low, broad, and shrubby. It generally suckers to form domed thickets, tree-like plants having leaning, curved trunks and sparse branches. The leaves are pinnately compound up to 15" in length with 11-31 narrow pointed leaflets each 3-1½" long. The leaves are green and become brilliant orange to red in the fall. The flowers are tiny greenish in dense, hairy pointed clusters at branch tips from May-July. The fruit is small reddish berries in pointed clusters 6" long to branch tips and persistent through the winter. The bark is grayish, smooth with warty horizontal lenticels. The Staghorn Sumac is similar to the Smooth Sumac, but averages to a maximum of 61" tall, and has densely fuzzy twigs and fruity clusters. It is called Staghorn because of its branching habits and its twigs are fuzzy like a deer's antlers. The brilliance of its autumn foliage and the curiosity of its crimson "lollipop" fruits persisting well into winter have made this sumac, native to the woods of northeastern U.S., a popular garden tree.

There is a cluster of Staghorn Sumac on the edge of the 4th terrace of the land that was the Mt. Laurel Cemetery. It is just before the slope of a dirt and grass path known as Hillcrest Avenue. The terraces and the cluster is northeast of the chapel. There are also smaller clusters along Valley Road, east of the carriage house and along the curve leading to the Maplewood Ave. loop.

