Black ash wood is used for interior finishing, cabinet work, baskets and, to a limited extent, pulp.
The leaves are 12–15 inches long, opposite, and have 7–11 leaflets that are 4–5 inches long, and without stalks except the one at the tip. Leaflets are lance-shape and have remotely-toothed margins. The upper surface is dark green. There are buff-colored hairs at the junction of the leaflets and rachis.

The fruit is a single samara occurring in clusters. The seed is flattened and completely surrounded by the wing.

The twigs are smooth, gray to olive-green. The buds are black or brown and pointed at the tip. The inner layer of the bark is dirty white.

The wood is coarse-grained, heavy, tough, durable and pliable. It is used for interior finishing, cabinet work, baskets and, to a limited extent, pulp. In the past it was used to make barrel hoops.