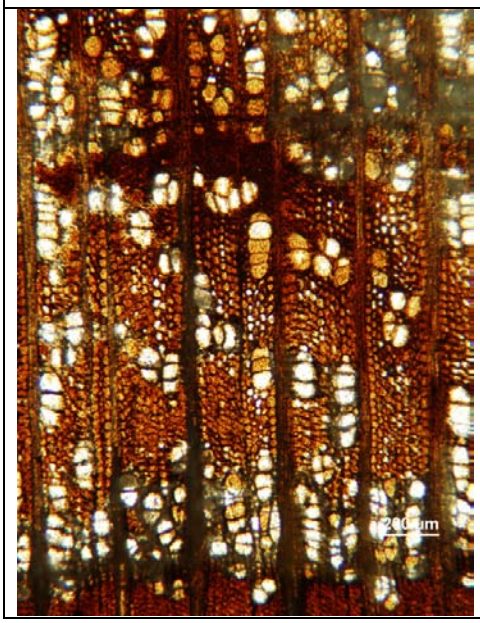
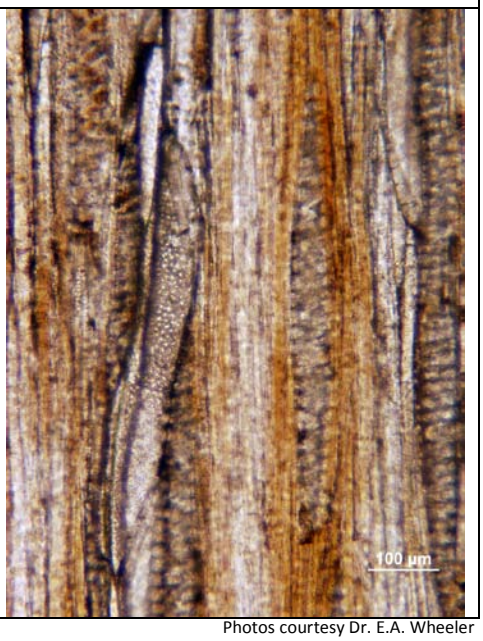
Araliaceoxylon miocenica

Family: Araliaceae

Naming reference: Wheeler, E.A. & T.A. Dillhoff. 2009. The Middle Miocene wood flora of Vantage, Washington, USA. IAWA Journal, Supplement 7. 101p.

Transverse section	**Radial section (note scalariform perforation plates with widely spaced bars)**	**Tangential section**
		

Photos courtesy Dr. E.A. Wheeler

Diagnostic features: Semi-ring porous. Vessels mostly in radial multiples, some irregular clusters in earlywood, tending towards diagonal arrangement in latewood. Rays mostly 4-seriate, heterocellular with 1(-3) marginal rows of square to upright cells. Perforation plates scalariform with 4-20 (mostly <5) widely spaced bars. Narrower vessel elements tend to have the most bars. Some narrow elements also have helical thickenings. Axial parenchyma rare, scanty paratracheal, >4 cells per strand.

Discussion: This is a newly described genus and species that was not recognized by earlier workers. The description is based on a single distinctive specimen from Vantage that was in Beck's wood collection at Harvard University. The radial section photo above shows the perforation plates with widely spaced bars.

Modern Araliaceae consist mostly of trees and shrubs found mainly in subtropical to tropical Asia and the Americas. There are a few temperate species, including two that are native to Washington State: the spiny devil's club (*Oplopanax horridus*) which grows in moist forests, and wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*) which is found in the northeastern corner of the state. There is an extensive fossil record of the Araliaceae in northwestern North America, although some of the fossil descriptions are outdated and require reevaluation.