

A photograph of a forest with many tall, straight tree trunks and a dense canopy of bright green leaves. The text "Tree Identification" is overlaid in the center.

# Tree Identification

Learn about the trees in your backyard!



# Conifer

- Conifers are trees or plants that have cones.
- The cones are where their seeds are.
- Some coniferous trees include.
- Cedars
- Pines
- Hemlocks
- Redwoods
- Junipers



[https://conifersociety.org/imager/news/what-is-a-conifer-tree/38060/Jord%20120923\\_5647-350x233\\_8d0266d973b18f5483a04d0f93a79f0e.jpg](https://conifersociety.org/imager/news/what-is-a-conifer-tree/38060/Jord%20120923_5647-350x233_8d0266d973b18f5483a04d0f93a79f0e.jpg)

# Deciduous

- A deciduous tree or plant is one that loses its leaves (or needles) in the winter.
- Deciduous trees include:
- Maples
- Oaks
- Beeches
- Ash



<https://sciencing.com/plants-animals-deciduous-forests-7437021.html>

# Northern Red Oak

- Leaves: Light green leaves with 7-9 lobes
- Bark: Gray-brown, darker on old trees, rounded ridges, can be scaly.
- Bark: A young tree's bark is smooth and light grey.





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# White Oak

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- Leaves: Bright light green with 5-7 lobes; the leaf is rounded in between the lobes.
- Bark: Light ash-grey. It peels from the bottom, top, and sides. The bark appears furrowed.



# Eastern White Pine

- Tallest tree in Eastern North America
- Used for British ship masts.
- Needles: Three sided, finely toothed. They tend to be longer than other coniferous tree needles. They grow in bundles of five.
- Memory device: “White” has five letters in it, and its needles grow in groups of 5.
- The red pine’s needles grow in clusters of 2.
- The yellow pine’s needles grow in bundles of 3.
- Young Bark: Smooth and gray with a slight green tinge.
- Old bark: Ridges that are dark and scaly. The bark grows flaky with age.



<https://images.fineartamerica.com/images-medium-large-5/eastern-white-pines--albany-new-hampshire-usa-erin-paul-donovan.jpg>



<https://newenglandforestry.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/white-pine-bark.jpg>



## Eastern Hemlock Tree

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- Needles: Flat and light green.
- Bark: Brown-gray. The bark develops scaly deep fissures and ridges with age.



<https://nfs.unl.edu/images/wood-plant/closeup.JPG>





## Tamarack (American Larch)

- One of the few species of conifers that is deciduous.
- It's a conifer that loses its leaves!
- Needles: Grow in clusters of 10-20; they grow in tight spirals around the twigs.
- Bark: Gray to reddish brown, thin irregular scales; the bark of older trees becomes more gray with more scales.



<https://www.ck12.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/tamaracktree.jpg>

## Moose Wood (Striped Maple)

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- Leaves: Three pointed lobes.
- Bark: Lightly striped, light gray-brown



<https://campus.albion.edu/stowell-arboretum/wp-content/blogs.dir/657/files/moosewood/P1300065MoosewoodWS.JPG>

<https://newfs.s3.amazonaws.com/taxon-images-1000s1000/Sapindaceae/acer-pensylvanicum-ba-wcullina.jpg>



# Aspen

- Leaves: Bright green, heart shaped.
- Bark: Whitish green bark; as it grows older, it becomes grayish and rough and furrowed.
- Aspens pop up as identical clones, and all spread from the same root system.



<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/aspen-tree.jpg>



*Quaking Aspen*  
*Populus tremuloides*

<https://ih1.redbubble.net/image.367513697.7730/raf,750x1000,075,t,FFFFFF:97ab1c12de.u7.jpg>

# White (Paper) Birch

- Leaves: Dark green and smooth, triangular to oval in shape. They are rounded at the base, pointed at the end, and they have fine teeth on the edges.
- Bark: Thin and white with darker streaks; it peels off the tree and resembles paper, thus the name “paper birch.” Salmon or pink colored inner bark is revealed when the outer bark is peeled away.
- The white birch is the official New Hampshire state tree. Other varieties of birch in the state include the yellow birch and gray birch.





# American Beech

- Leaves: Dark green and “toothed” on the edges; they have noticeable veins that end in a tooth.
- Bark: Smooth, silver-gray bark
- Memory device: An American **beech** tree leaf looks like a surfboard, and surfboards are found at the **beach**.



<https://cf.ltkcdn.net/garden/images/orig/187218-480x640-beech.jpg>



[https://www.coldstreamfarm.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/beech\\_american\\_leaf\\_20160605\\_145236.jpg](https://www.coldstreamfarm.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/beech_american_leaf_20160605_145236.jpg)

# Sugar Maple

- Leaves: Five lobes. The lobes near the top of the leaf are larger and deeply notched. The areas between the lobes are rounded.
- Bark: Gray-brown. On young trees, it is smooth, but old bark has deeper fissures. The bark becomes thicker, darker, and deeply furrowed into vertical scaly ridges as the tree ages.
- Twigs: Reddish brown to light brown.
- The leaf depicted on the Canadian flag is that of a sugar maple.



[https://farm66.staticflickr.com/65535/46850066805\\_Scc14d381f\\_b.jpg](https://farm66.staticflickr.com/65535/46850066805_Scc14d381f_b.jpg)



<https://i.pinimg.com/564x/24/54/9e/24549e3aff794279682730da5564575f.jpg>






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## Red Maple

- Leaves: Roughly toothed with three to five shallow lobes
- Bark: When young, it is smooth and light gray. Old bark becomes dark gray and rougher.
- The red maple has lighter, smoother bark than the sugar maple.
- Twigs: Slender and glossy; they begin green and turn red as the season progresses.



You may find these  
common plants on the  
forest floor



## Indian Cucumber (common plant)

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- Leaves: One or two whorls of leaves. Light green in color.
- Develops berries when more mature.
- Has a starchy white root that is edible.
- Grows in wet semi-shaded wooded areas and in open woods and forests.



joshfekteau

<https://joshfekteau.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/indiancucumber.jpg>

## Hobble Bush (common plant)

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- Leaves: Finely toothed with noticeable veins. Rounded leaves ending in a point.
- Leaves: Rounded lobes that are heart shaped at the base. The leaves are green in summer and turn reddish purple in the fall.



[https://wcbotanicalclub.files.wordpress.com/2018/06/20180608\\_112346pl.jpg?w=900](https://wcbotanicalclub.files.wordpress.com/2018/06/20180608_112346pl.jpg?w=900)



# Plantain (common plant)

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- Often thought of a weed, plantains are very common in North America.
- Classified as an herb, and it can be used for insect bites and bee stings.
- Chew a leaf of it, and then place it on a mosquito bite. It helps to make the itching stop.



<https://www.greenprophet.com/wp-content/uploads/plantain-weed-medicine.jpg>



<https://www.idealhacks.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Plantain-Weed-Benefits.jpg>

## Poison Ivy (common plant)

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- Leaves: Range in color from shiny green to shiny red. They grow in groups of three and have pointy tips and jagged edges.
- Poison ivy can come in the form of a small plant, vine, or shrub.



<https://www.thespruce.com/pictures-of-poison-ivy-4071932>



[http://www.healthline.com/hlcmsresource/images/tnce/outdoor-health-poison-ivy-remedies\\_thumb.jpg](http://www.healthline.com/hlcmsresource/images/tnce/outdoor-health-poison-ivy-remedies_thumb.jpg)



# This Week's Activity

- Go into your backyard (or go for a short walk in your neighborhood), look at the trees, and see how many of these leaves you can identify. And the next time you are in the woods, observe the trees around you, and see if you can identify any of them based on what you have learned here.
- Go out and collect different kinds of leaves, bring them home, and try to identify them. But make sure that you do not collect any poisonous leaves such as poison ivy!
- If you want to get creative, use the leaves you collected to make a leaf rubbing.
- Here is what you will need: A white piece of paper, crayons, leaves, and a flat hard surface.
- Lay your leaves on a flat hard surface (such as a table), and then lay a white piece of paper on top of the leaf or leaves. Use a crayon and rub it gently horizontally across the white piece of paper. The outline of the leaf will soon be visible on the white piece of paper. After the picture of the leaf emerges, label what type of leaf it is.
- It's a fun activity, and I am excited to see your leaf rubbings at next week's lesson!
- Next week, we will talk about some of the leaves you collected and the trees you identified.



# Sources

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