



Local Tree Species Identification

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Helpful Terms and Tips

Use the following slides to help you identify your tree!

Deciduous vs. Evergreen Trees

Deciduous Trees



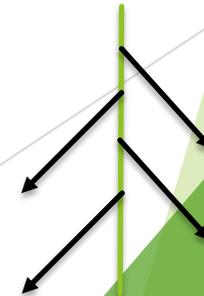
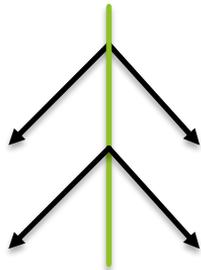
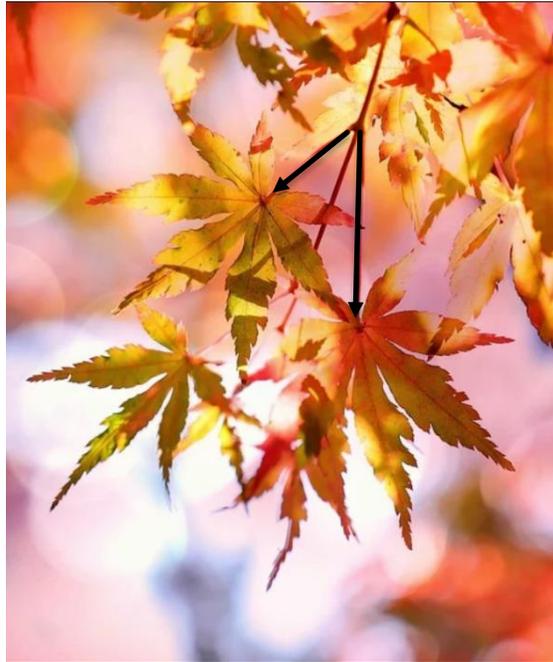
Evergreen Trees



Alternating vs. Opposite

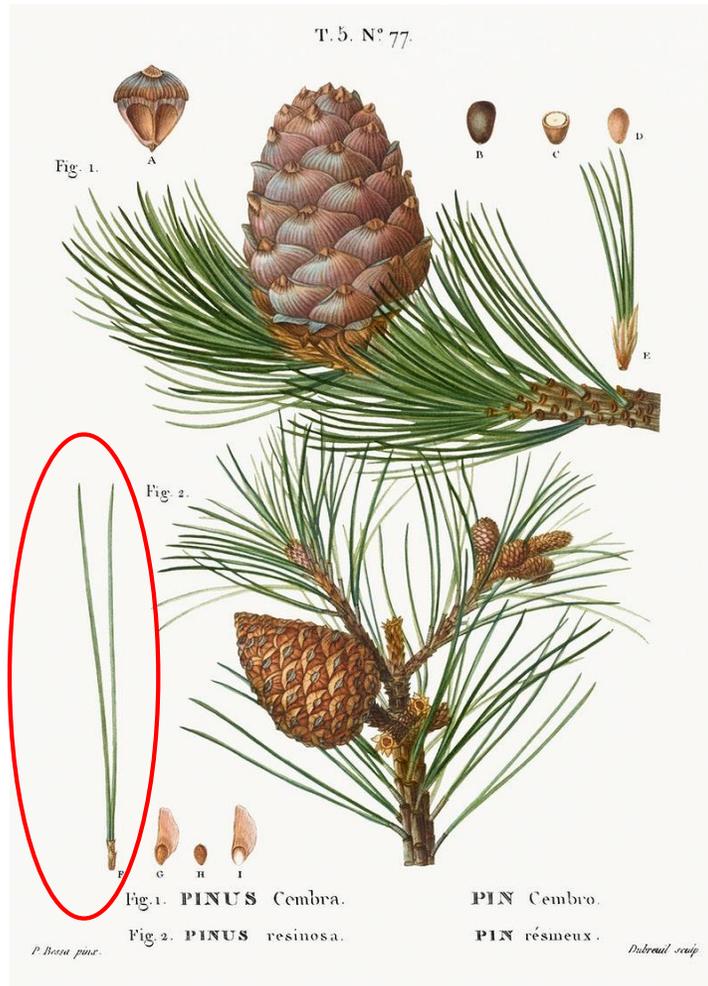
Opposite Leaves and Branches

Alternating Leaves and Branches



Cluster Needles vs. Individual Needles

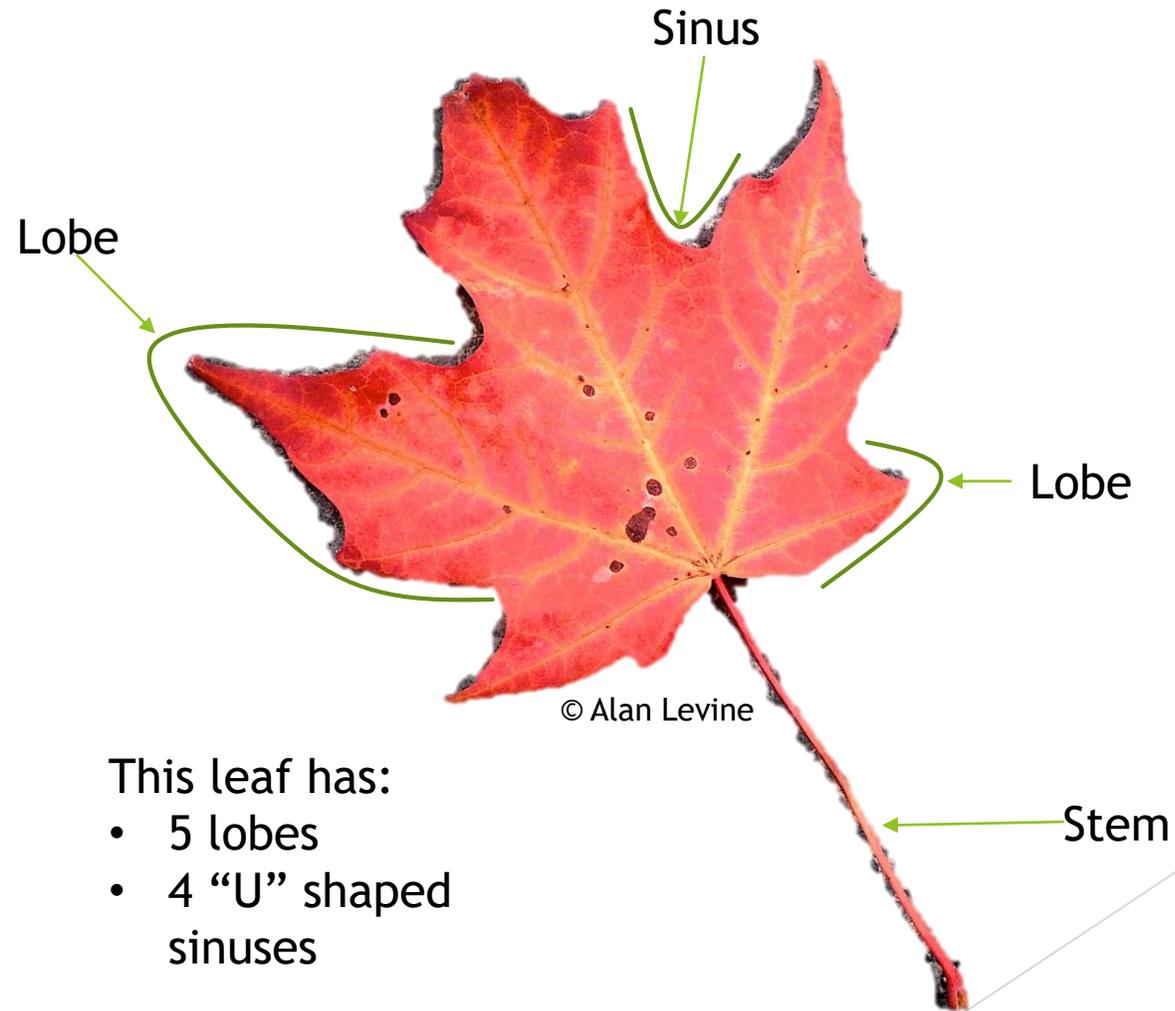
Cluster Needles



Individual Needles (by themselves)



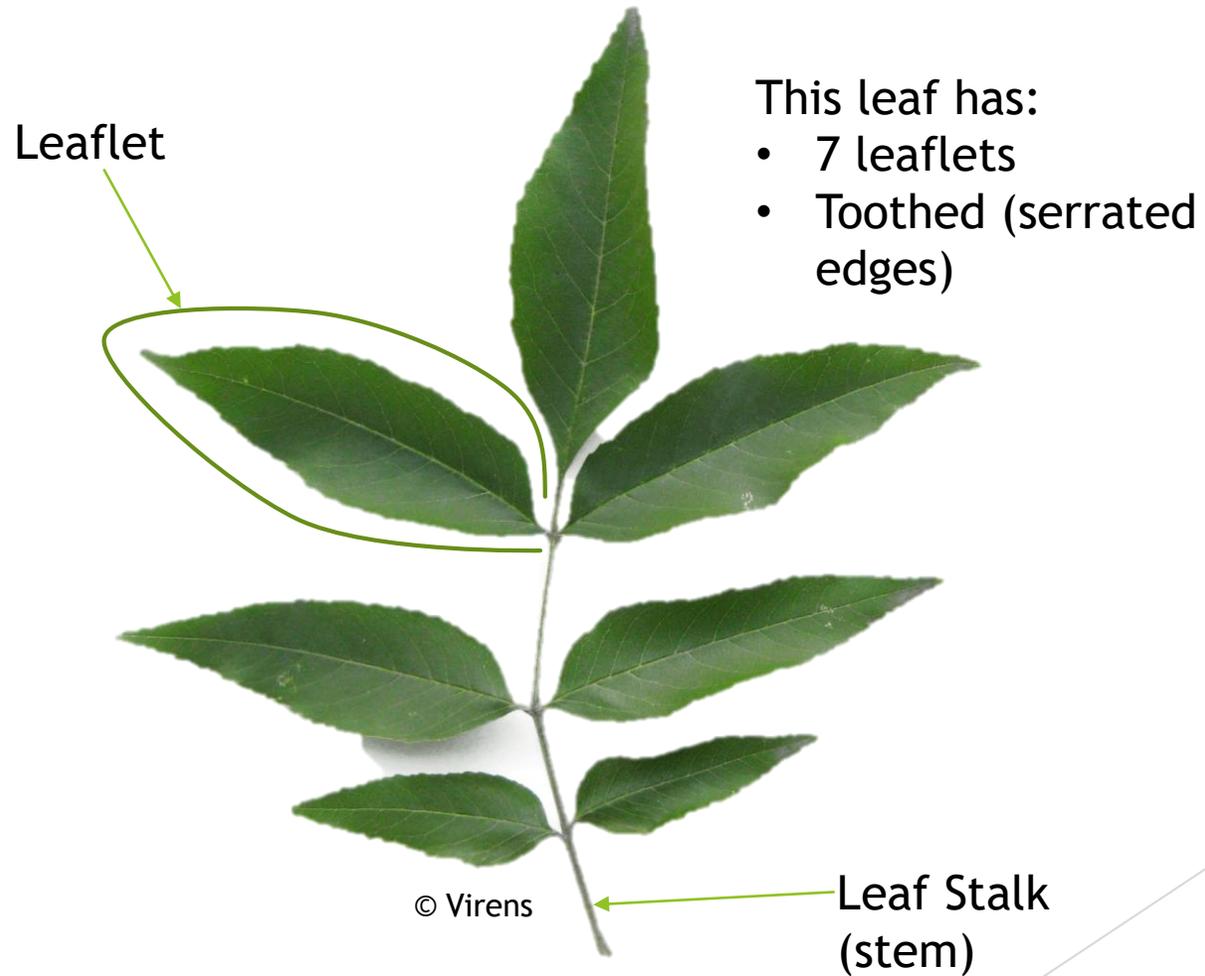
Simple Leaf



This leaf has:

- 5 lobes
- 4 “U” shaped sinuses

Compound Leaf



Ten Common Tree Species

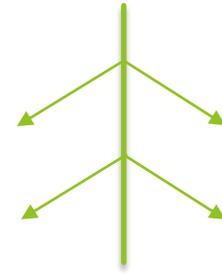
The following slides describe ten common species in the North Country. Not all trees can be identified using these slides. It was developed to help identify 10 of the most common trees found in our area. If you need additional information to identify a tree, please let us know by contacting us through our website.

Sugar Maple

Sugar maples are the most common tree in the North Country and they are New York's state tree. Their sap is used to make maple syrup!

Key Features:

- Deciduous (leafy trees)
- Leaves change color in the fall
- Simple leaves
- Leaves have 5 lobes
- Leaf edges are smooth
- Leaves and branches are arranged opposite of one another
- Grooved bark on large trees
- Smooth bark on small trees



Leaf and branch arrangement



© Alan Levine



© Britannica



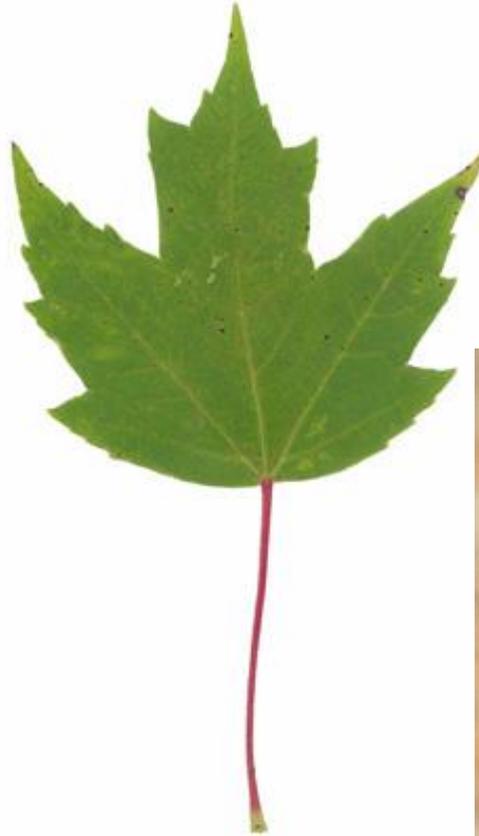
Sugar maple bud in the winter. In the spring, these buds will sprout green shoots.

Red Maple

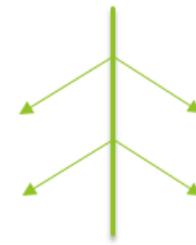
Red maples are very good at adjusting to different environments! They can be found in shady and sunny areas, high and low elevations, and wet and dry soils.

Key Features:

- Deciduous (leafy trees)
- Leaves change color in the fall
- Simple leaves
- Simple leaves have 3-5 lobes with “V” shaped sinuses
- Sinuses (space between the lobes) are shallow
- Leaf edges are serrated (toothed)
- Leaves and branches are arranged opposite of one another
- Leaf stems are often red



© omafra.gov.on.ca



Leaf and branch arrangement



© Go Botany Native Land Trust



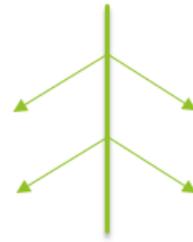
© North American Insects and Spiders

Silver Maple

Silver maple sap is sweet, but not as sugary as sugar maples. If you're still unsure if your tree is a silver maple, you can try breaking one of its twigs. If it is a silver maple, the broken twig will release an unpleasant odor.

Key Features:

- Deciduous (leafy trees)
- Leaves change color in the fall
- Simple leaves
- Simple leaves have 5 lobes with “U” shaped sinuses
- Sinuses (space between the lobes) are very deep
- Leaves and branches are arranged opposite of one another
- Leaf edges are very serrated (toothed)
- Underside of leaves are white or silver



Leaf and branch arrangement



© John M Hagstrom



School of Renewable Natural Resources
LSU AgCenter
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Paper Birch

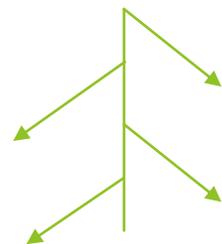
Paper birch trees need a lot of sunlight to grow! They are usually the first tree to grow in an areas that were recently logged. Paper birch trees are among the tallest of all the birch tree species and can grow up to 80 feet tall!

Key Features:

- Deciduous (leafy trees)
- Leaves change color in the fall
- Simple leaves
- Leaves and branches are in an alternating arrangement
- Leaves are oval and not lobed
- Leaves have serrated (toothed edges) and are wide in the middle
- Bark is papery, white to light gray, and can sometimes peel off the trunk



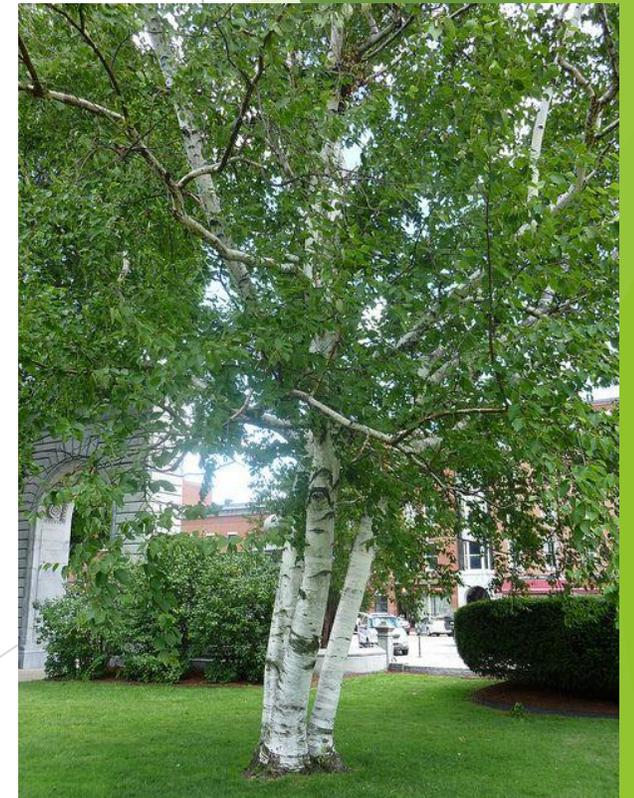
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Leaf and branch arrangement



© macphailwoods.org



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Red Oak

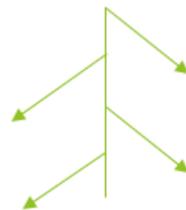
Red oak trees grow two feet per year during their first two years of life! They can grow to be 60 to 75 feet tall and 45 feet wide.

Key Features:

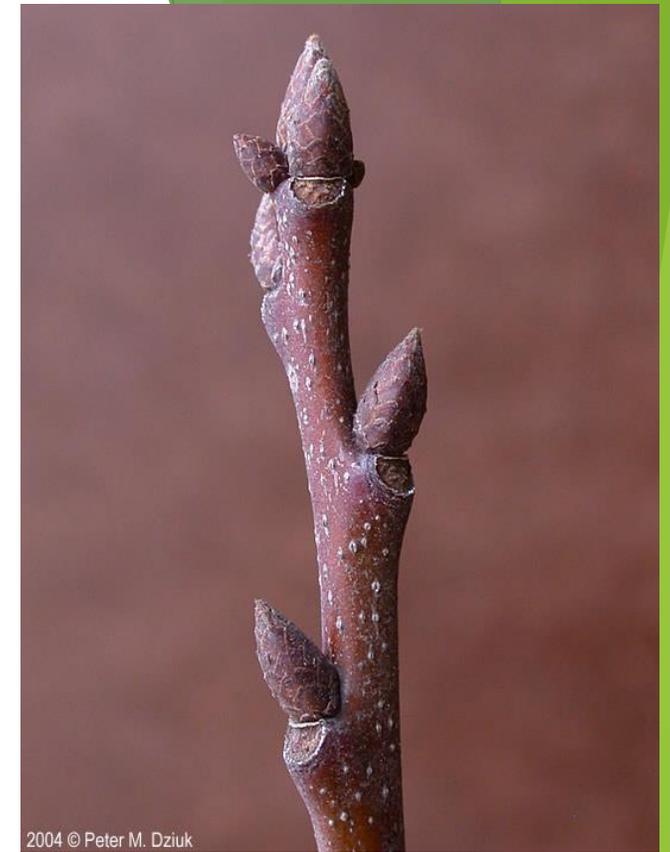
- Deciduous tree (leafy trees)
- Trees change color in the fall
- Simple leaves
- Leaves and branches are in an alternating arrangement
- Leaves have 7-11 lobes
- Leaves have pointy lobes with “U” shaped sinuses
- Bark on large trees have white-ish or silver stripes running vertically down the trunk



© arborday.org



Leaf and branch arrangement



2004 © Peter M. Dziuk



© tree-guide.com

White Ash

White ash are the largest of the ash trees in North America and can get up to 100 feet tall!

Key Features:

- Deciduous (leafy trees)
- Compound leaves
- Leaves change color in the fall
- Leaves and branches are arranged opposite of one another
- Compound leaves are long with 5-9 leaflets
- Leaflets are not lobed and can either have slightly toothed or completely smooth edges
- Bark is gray and has diamond shaped burrows



Leaf and branch arrangement



These insects are a little smaller than the width of a penny.

Emerald ash borer may be found on Ash trees. These insects are not originally from New York and have no natural predators here. They feed on the bark of ash trees, killing the trees in 1-3 years if it becomes infested. Do you want to survey and protect your ash trees? If so, visit <https://www.natureupnorth.org/surveyashtree> to learn more!



White ash winter bud



© beasmartash.org



© National Park Service

Box Elder

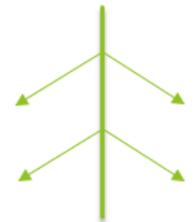
Box elders are often confused with ash trees. However, you can tell them apart because they tend to have less leaflets than ash trees and their twigs are a bright green color.

Key Features:

- Deciduous (leafy trees)
- Leaves change color in the fall
- Compound leaves
- Compound leaves have 3-5 (sometimes 7) leaflets
- Leaflet edges are very serrated (toothed) and lobed
- Leaves and branches are arranged opposite of one another
- Bark is light brown when the tree is young
- Bark is grayish brown and deeply grooved in older trees
- Twigs are bright green



© tree.oplin.org



Leaf and branch arrangement

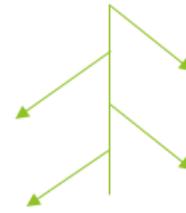


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Mockernut Hickory

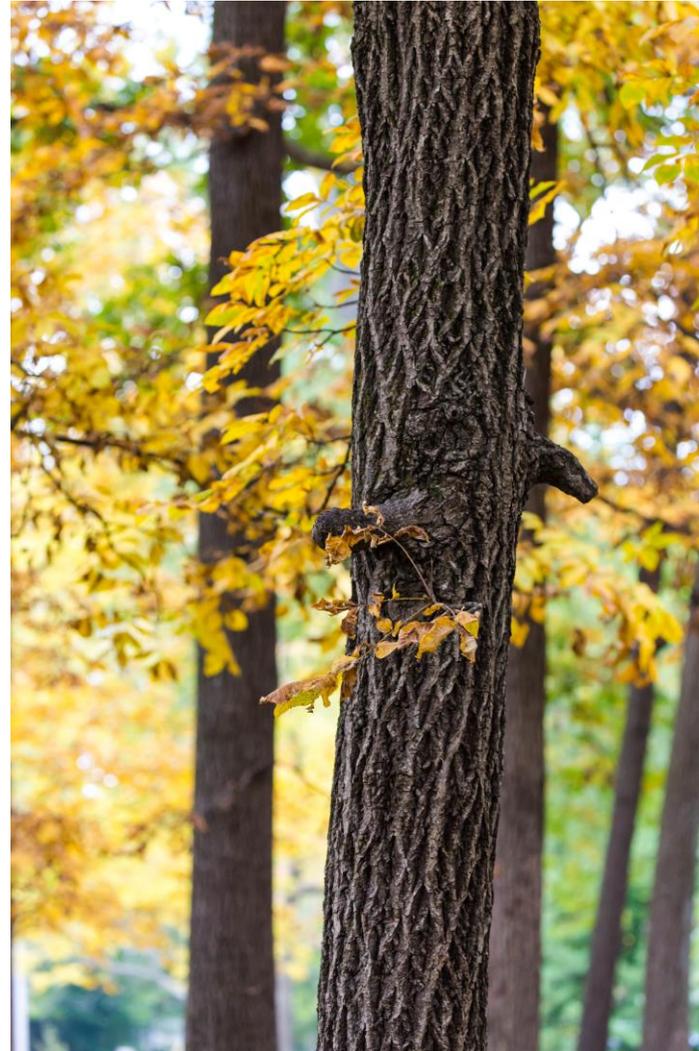


Leaf and branch arrangement

Mockernut hickories are the most abundant of all the hickories. They are part of the walnut family and can live up to 500 years!

Key Features:

- Deciduous (broad leafy trees)
- Leaves change color in the fall
- Compound leaves
- Compound leaves have 7-9 leaflets
- Leaves and branches are in an alternating arrangement
- Have nuts that are 2.5-4 cm long
- Bark is dark, rough, and thin
- Bark has deep vertical furrows



Mockernut Hickory bud in the winter

© Kate St. John

Eastern Hemlock

Eastern hemlocks can live for over 500 years and reach 170 feet tall! If you notice a lot of large Hemlock trees, it means that the forest is very healthy and has been around for a long time.

Key Features:

- Evergreen (needles)
- Needles are attached individually
- Needles are 1cm long and flat
- The top of the needles are a dark shiny green
- The underside of the needles have two white stripes
- Bark is cinnamon red to gray and covered in thick scales



This is a cluster of young Hemlock trees.

© dec.ny.gov



These white, fuzzy specks are the Woolly Adelgid.

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid may be found on Hemlock trees. These bugs have no predators in New York and can kill the tree if it becomes infested. Do you see any on your Hemlock? If so, visit <https://blogs.cornell.edu/nyshemlockinitiative/rt-hwa-finding/> to report it!



© University of Vermont

The underside of Eastern Hemlock needles

Eastern White Pine

Eastern white pines are the largest evergreen trees in the North Country! They are easy to identify because there is one needle for each letter in its name: W-H-I-T-E.

Key Features:

- Evergreen (needles)
- Needles are attached in bundles of five
- Needles are 7-13 cm long and flexible
- Bark is dark gray and smooth



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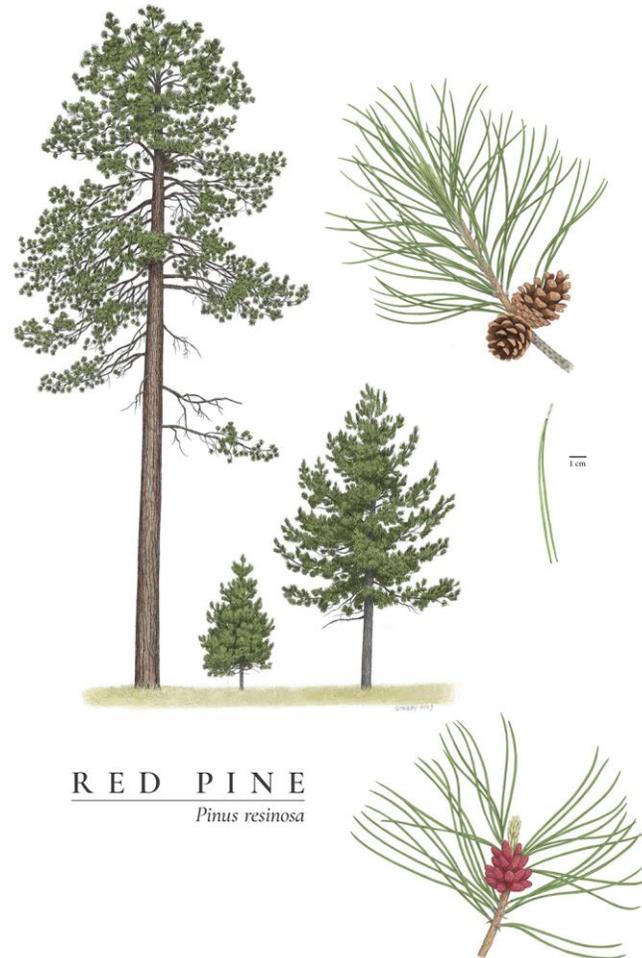
© James St. John

Red Pine

Red pines can grow up to 120 feet tall and their wood has been used to make railway tires and ship masts!

Key Features:

- Evergreen (needles)
- Needles are attached in bundles of two
- Needles are 10-15 cm long
- Needles break clearly when bent
- Bark is light-gray or pinkish gray



© Anne Chase

Scotch Pine

Scotch pines are also known as Scots pines and will live for 150 to 300 years. Some of the oldest living Scotch pines have lived to be over 760 years old!

Key Features:

- Evergreen (needles)
- Needles are in bundles of two
- Needles are 3.5-8 cm long
- Bark is very orange at the top of the trunk and/or branches



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