

"A few more tips..."

As you see, this checklist is for summer use, when the leaves are out. Come winter, you will have a difficult time remembering the trees if you memorize only the leaves. Take some time to become familiar with the bark of each tree as you visit them. Learn the texture, pattern and roughness of each tree's bark. Use the leaf as a learning tool, but do not disregard the bark.

Learn to recognize the trees by their bark, the way a forester can. They learn to recognize a tree's "facial characteristics" the way you learn to recognize your friends' faces!!

...but remember, just as our own faces become wrinkled with age, so too does a tree's bark change as it grows older.

...and for all you "BUDDIN" botanists:

To identify buds of some winter trees, it is important to notice their arrangement on the twig. Are they in pairs or opposite each other? Look for the opposite buds on the maples, ash, and dogwoods. Some buds are alternately arranged on the twig, such as the elms and oaks. Some buds have distinct shapes like the "duckbill" of the Tuliptree, or the onion-shaped terminal bud of the Flowering Dogwood.



Tuliptree



Flowering Dogwood

As with all checklists, this one is not final. Please advise us on the sighting and location of any species not known to be common.

BROWN COUNTY STATE PARK  
established 1929  
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# COMMON TREES OF BROWN COUNTY STATE PARK



Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
Division of State Parks  
Naturalist Service

“WELCOME TO BROWN COUNTY STATE PARK...”

In no better place can one enjoy tree study than in our “hills o’ Brown”—Brown County State Park! It is here in the largest of Indiana’s state parks, (15,543 acres) that the rolling hills are richly covered with a young, diverse forest. Use this brochure to help you learn some of the common trees. Park trails will lead you past many kinds of trees not mentioned here. A tree field guide will help in further study.



Take time to view the park’s forest from the many vistas and pull-offs. See if you can pick out the several pine plantations planted during the early 1930s. Pines are not native to southern Indiana and were planted as a soil erosion preventative.

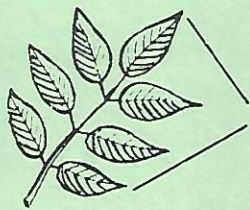
Many trees are identified on the rugged Olge Hollow Nature Preserve self-guiding nature trail-trail #5 on your park map. Here you will see the rare Yellowwood tree, a member of the Legume family. Notice its preference for growing on north-facing slopes. Do not confuse it with the more common and similar-looking American Beech. Both have a smooth, grayish bark, but do you see any other differences?



Yellowwood Leaf



PLEASE REMEMBER...Let all fallen timber and limbs remain on the ground. Do not gather it for firewood. This is part of the protection policy administered in all of your Indiana State Parks.



Compound Leaf

Leaflets



Simple Leaf

— These trees possess COMPOUND leaves:

**Black Walnut** - There are 15 or more leaflets on the large compound leaf of this tree; look for the green, fragrant hulls surrounding the nuts in late summer. The wood of this tree is highly-prized by both wood-worker and furniture owner! The tree may grow 70-100 feet tall and 2-3 feet in diameter.



— **White Ash** - One finds this ash within close company to the oaks. The bark is gray with interlocking ridges and fissures. The leaves are 8 to 12” long, usually with 7 oval to oblong leaflets, 3 to 5” long; the margins of the leaflets are smooth or finely toothed.



— **Shagbark Hickory** - It would pay to learn the location of the “Shag”, then return in the fall with bags and pails for the tastiest of the nutmeats! This hickory is usually found on well-drained soil, in close association with the oaks. Mature trees have distinct shaggy bark composed of thin, narrow scales, curved out at the ends.



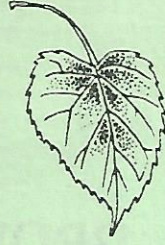
— **Sumacs** - Thought by many to be the weed tree that causes a serious rash, these trees are the first to be cut away from many private properties. The many Sumac trees in southern Indiana greatly benefit wildlife, however, and they will not cause blisters on people who touch them.



— **Boxelder** - This member of the Maple family possesses the 3 leaves that resemble poison ivy; see if you notice the similarity! Look for the Boxelder to grow on moist soil, near streams or lakes. There are several trees of this type growing along Salt Creek by the north gate covered bridge. It also produces the winged seeds, called samaras, that all children know of as “Nature’s helicopters”!



— Basswood - (or Linden), this is the tree that most beekeepers are on the watch for, as basswood honey is most highly-prized! The wood is used by many wood carvers and they will attest to its close-grained, white wood. The name has nothing to do with the game fish; it is derived from bast, which are used to weave mats or to wind around split handles of a hoe or rake.



— Black Cherry - The branches of this tree often harbor the nests of the tent caterpillar. The bark of an old tree is almost black, made of small broken pieces of the original smooth surface. The leaf has very small incurving teeth bordering the oval shape. Black Cherry fruits serve as a valuable food source for many kinds of wildlife, including songbirds, foxes and ruffed grouse.



— Sycamore - A short walk along trail 2 will lead you past several of these "sick"-looking, flaky-barked trees. They are trees of the river bottoms and flood plains, their white bark in the upper-most branches being good fieldmarks to look for. Very large trees are not uncommon today as they grow fast and put on great size in a short amount of time.



— Flowering Dogwood - Although there are several other dogwoods growing in our park, it is the Flowering Dogwood that is most easily recognized and often admired! The 4-petaled, white blooms appear in the first few weeks of spring, a time when they have little competition for our attention! Look for the clusters of red berries at the sight of the flower later in the fall, a welcomed food for migrating and over-wintering birds.



— Sweet Gum - The star shape of this leaf cannot be confused with any other; it is, indeed, the main characteristic to look for. The hanging, dry fruit, a ball covered with small thorns, opens to release tiny, winged seeds. Look for the Sweet Gum trees by the park Fire Tower and in the parking lot median strips by the swimming pool. This tree can produce some beautiful autumn colors!



— Red Oak - is a wide-spread, common oak of open woods. The dark-colored bark of this tree shows distinct strips running vertically. These marks are smooth, light-colored, and appear as though they had been ironed-on by someone, carelessly. Leaves are dull, dark-green on top and the midrib (vein in the middle of the leaf) is often red. The annual crop of nuts, or mast, varies greatly from year to year.



— American Beech - Take a walk along trails 1 & 2 to see some of the oldest trees in the park; they will be the beech tree known for its smooth, gray bark, and all those initials! Nuts appear in the fall, tightly enclosed in a spiny hull. The best use of the American Beech, however, is by the many forms of wildlife that come to its hollow trunks for shelter.



— Tuliptree (or Yellow Poplar) - Surely all Indiana citizens know this tree as our state tree, but many call it a true poplar; rather it belongs to the Magnolia family. It was highly sought by early settlers who knew of its straight, insect-resistant wood. These features alone made it perfect for log cabins, some of which are still standing today. Look for its large tulip flower blooms in mid-May.



These trees possess SIMPLE leaves:

— Red Maple - The light-gray color in the upper part of this medium-sized tree might cause some to mistake it for the beech tree. The unique grains, known as "bird's eye" or curly maple, are sometimes hidden in this tree. The leaf stem is usually red throughout the summer months. Look for this tree hidden among others on moist hillsides and steep ravines. Its heavily-toothed leaf margin and general small shape make this leaf easily told from the more-common Sugar Maple.



— Sassafras - Known for the fine drink made from its roots, this tree's logs were also split for rails used in fencing many years ago. You will see these trees often growing in clumps, where their trunks are usually twisted and crooked in appearance. The three different leaf shapes are also a trademark for this tree: a mitten, lance-shaped and a 3-pointed leaf.



— Chestnut Oak - It was this tree that was used by early Brown County settlers to stain their leather goods to a rich, red color. Hundreds of thousands of trees were cut in the early days for the "tanbark", while the wood was left to rot in the forest. Tannic acids released from the bark when soaked in water, gave this tree a valuable reputation. A member of the oak family, its acorns produced in the fall are eagerly sought as food by wildlife, including the white-tailed deer.



— Largetooth Aspen - The slight metallic color to the bark of this tree is easy to pick out in the woods. The wood is of low desirability to the lumberman. Look for the flattened petiole, or leaf stem, allowing this tree to show the slightest sign of a breeze.



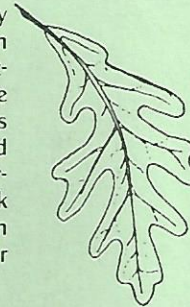
— Redbud - Look for the small pea-like flowers of this beauty in the spring, about the same time the Dogwoods are in bloom. The true fieldmark, however, is the well-defined, heart-shape possessed by each leaf. True to the members of the legume family, pods will appear after the flower is fertilized. It is a tree that is well liked for use in lawns and gardens.



— Black Gum - This tree is one of the few that turns color before any other in the fall. Look for the best example of our Black Gum, or Tupelo, at the junction of the north and west gate roads. Each leaf is a smooth oval with no teeth, and shows a glistening shine on the surface. When out in the open, as our example tree, it takes full advantage of the room around it, growing to a uniform bell-shape.



— White Oak - The light gray, scaly bark of the white oak stands out in the woods and can be easily recognized, once learned. Wood from the white oak is used today as it was years ago - to make barrels to hold liquids. The acorns, being less bitter-tasting than those from the red oak group, were used by local Indians in the making of mush and flour for breads.



— Sugar Maple - It is to trees such as these that sugar camp owners go in the early spring of the year to "tap"; spiles allow the sugar water to drain from the tree. Also known as a "hard" maple, the wood is more closely-grained than those from other maples. It is our most popular and common maple in southern Indiana.

