



The Education Committee of the Friends of the Arboretum created this self-guided tour booklet to enhance your enjoyment of the Overland Park Arboretum and to help you learn a little bit more about these twenty-four trees.

LEAF DRAWINGS BY FOTA VOLUNTEER  
ANDRA CHASE

## Overland Park Arboretum & Botanical Gardens

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[www.opabg.org](http://www.opabg.org)

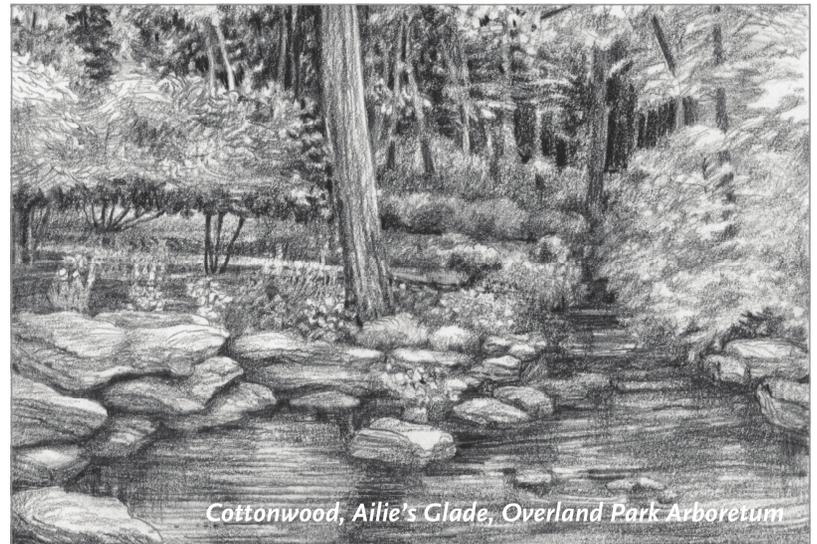
# TOUR OF THE TREES

## A Self-Directed Guide to Some of Our Favorite Trees

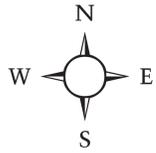
The Overland Park Arboretum & Botanical Gardens was established on land previously used for farming. Sections of land have been set aside for the study of trees and other plants in the environment.

Some long-established trees remain. Others have been carefully selected and planted. Twenty-four distinctive trees of special interest are included in this walking tour.

Please enjoy your self-guided tour and the background information we have provided about these special trees.



*Cottonwood, Ailie's Glade, Overland Park Arboretum*



## Dawn Redwood *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*

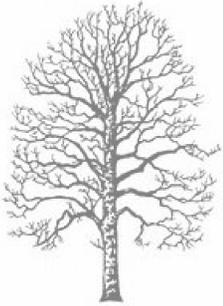
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- Beautiful feathery appearance in spring; orange-brown fall color
- Fast-growing, large deciduous conifer, 120 feet in 30 years
- 12-inch panicles of flowers and profuse 1-inch cones
- Named from ancient fossils, but found growing in China in 1941 in the provinces of Szechuan and Hupeh
- One of the oldest types of trees; on earth since the dinosaurs roamed; has been growing and reproducing itself for 50 million years
- Sometimes confused with Bald Cypress

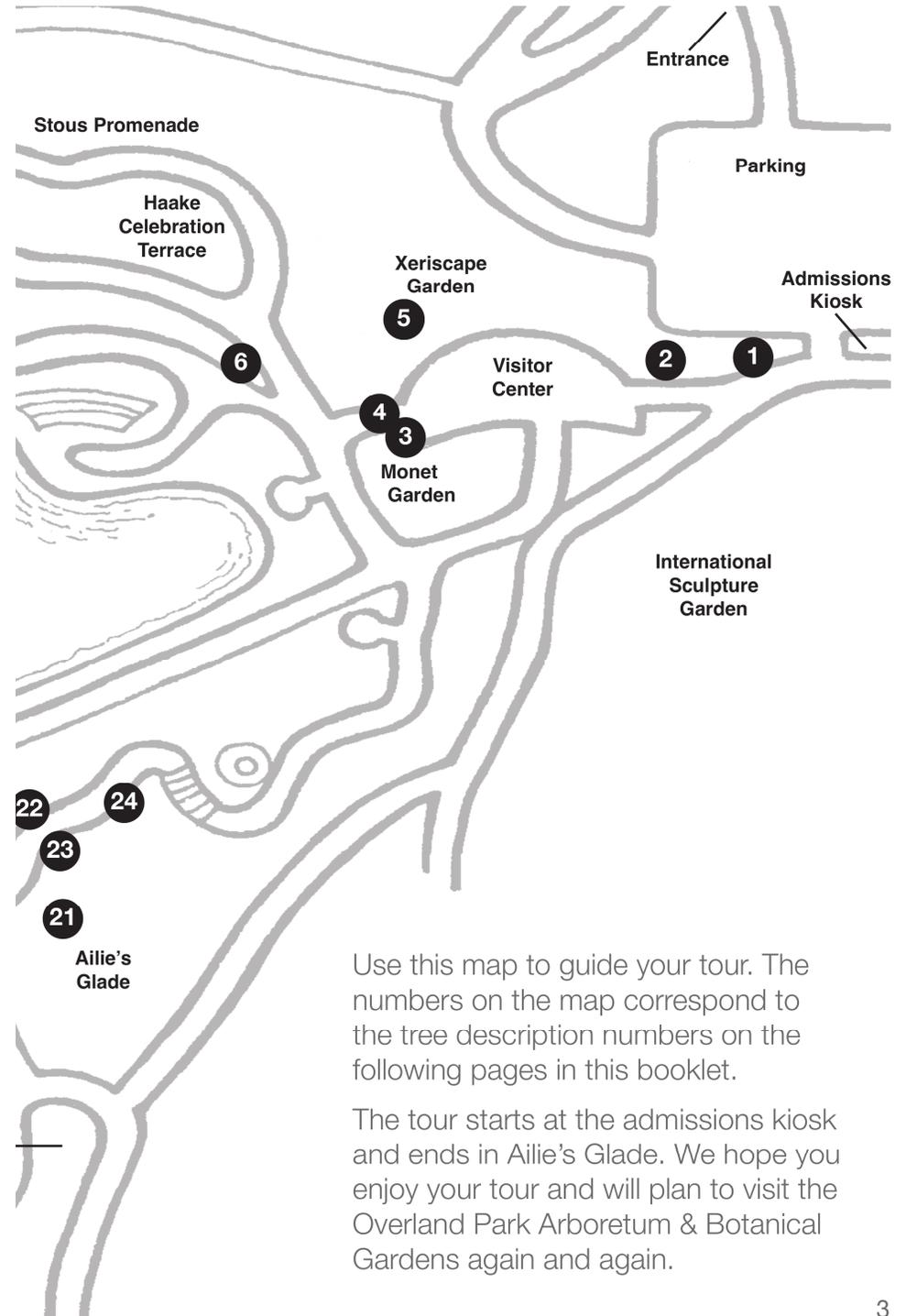


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## Sycamore *Platanus occidentalis*



- White bark that is striking against the blue winter sky
- Fast-growing, very large native tree, reaching 100 feet or more
- Native from Maine to Ontario and Minnesota, south to Texas and Florida
- Prickly, spherical seed capsules on long stems
- Bark exfoliates from the top of the tree downward
- Sometimes called the Ghost Tree due to its luminous whiteness at night



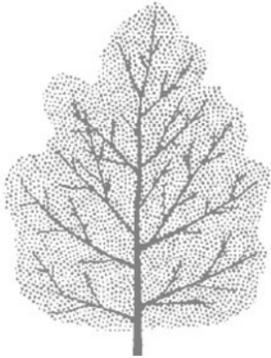
Use this map to guide your tour. The numbers on the map correspond to the tree description numbers on the following pages in this booklet.

The tour starts at the admissions kiosk and ends in Ailie's Glade. We hope you enjoy your tour and will plan to visit the Overland Park Arboretum & Botanical Gardens again and again.

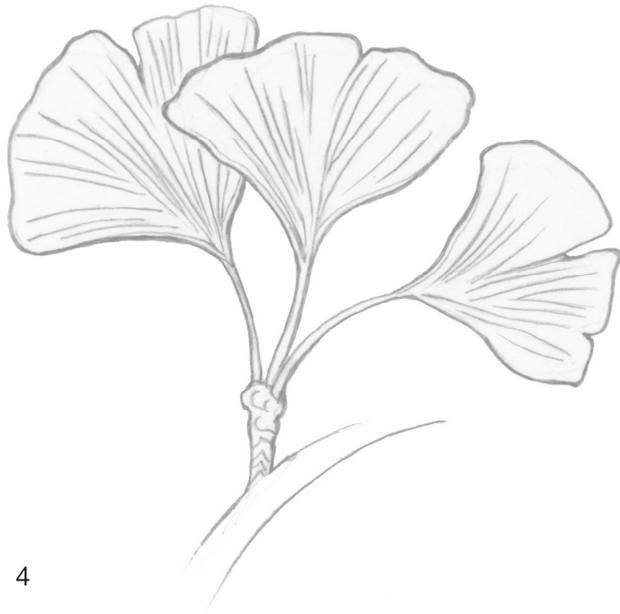
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## Ginkgo

### *Ginkgo biloba*



- A large, stately tree with unusual leaves and brilliant yellow fall color
- Slow to medium-growing, reaching 80 feet or more at maturity
- Native to eastern China and often grown at temples
- Male and female trees, both producing green flowers, but only female trees producing smelly fruit
- “Living fossil” 270 million years old
- No known living relatives
- Can develop aerial roots under large branches in response to crown damage, which then develop clonal reproduction upon contacting soil
- Also known as the Maidenhair Tree



## Persimmon

### *Diospyros virginiana*

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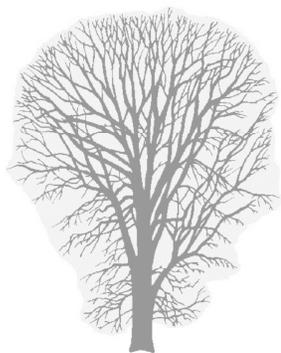


- Bears edible fruits eaten by animals
- Provides wood for golf club heads and pool cues
- Grows at a medium rate to a large tree up to 90 feet
- Native from Connecticut to Florida and west to Kansas and Texas
- Globose yellowish to pale orange fruit about 1.5 inches long
- Old wives’ tale says that frost is required to render the fruit edible; fact is that the fruit just needs to fully ripen
- Another old wives’ tale: one can predict the upcoming winter weather from a split persimmon seed
- Astringency, due to tannins
- Molasses made from fruit pulp, tea from leaves, coffee from roasted seeds
- Wood heavy, strong, and close grained.



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## Eastern Cottonwood *Populus deltoides*



- Large, fast-growing deciduous tree reaching 50 to 80 feet at maturity
- Not considered a landscape tree due to its messy “cotton” and its extensive root system, capable of damaging sidewalks and foundations
- *Deltoides* is the widest-ranging cottonwood, covering three-fourths of the United States, the lower half of Canada, and the upper reaches of Mexico
- Distinguished from other poplars by its yellowish twigs, gummy end buds, and coarsely toothed leaves
- Not used for lumber due to its tendency to warp; useful

only as lathe or plywood

- Well-known by pioneers because its shimmery leaves in the distance signaled moist soil and therefore a welcoming water source
- The official State Tree of Kansas



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## Bald Cypress *Taxodium distichum*

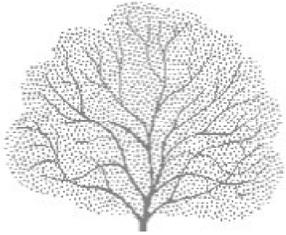


- A stately deciduous conifer whose wood is prized for carving, shingles and other uses
- Medium-growing tree reaching a mature height of 70 feet or more
- Native from Delaware to Florida and west to Texas
- Bears 5-inch panicles of flowers that become rounded 1-inch brown cones
- Although a conifer, sheds its foliage every year
- Known for its roots’ “knees” that grow up through the ground
- Durable wood, resistant to rot
- Essential to ecosystem of southern wetlands



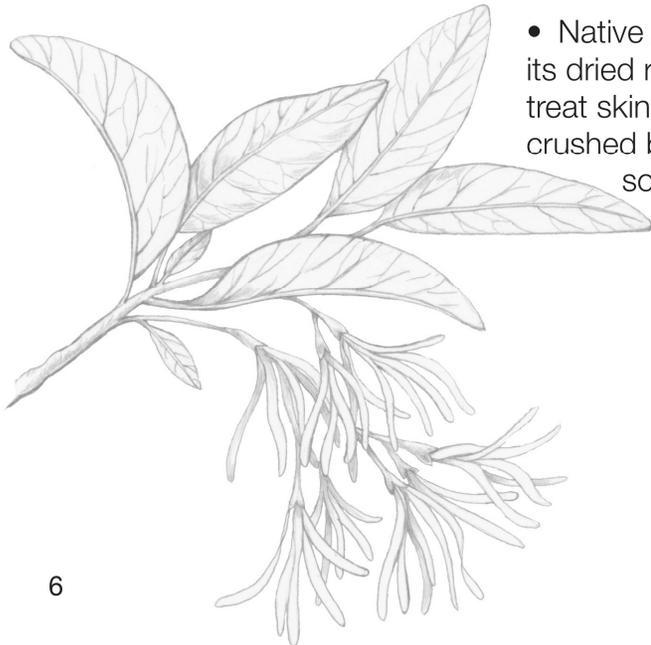
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## White Fringe Tree *Chionanthus virginicus*



- Known for feathery, fragrant white flowers in spring and lovely purple berries in fall (more flowers if male, but no berries)
- An open shrub, but can be trained to have one trunk and grow to about 20 feet tall as a tree
- Native to eastern United States, through the upper south and as far west as Oklahoma and eastern Kansas— zones 3 to 9, full sun to part shade
- Due to its feathery flowers, also known as Old Man's Beard and Grancy Greybeard; member of the Oleaceae (olive) family
- Very adaptable to a wide range of growing conditions and soils, although it prefers acidic soil; good urban tree

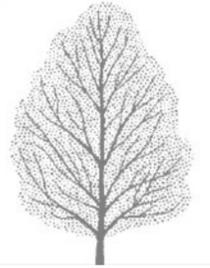
- Native Americans used its dried roots and bark to treat skin inflammations; crushed bark was used for sores and wounds



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## Shantung Maple *Acer truncatum*

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- Star-shaped leaves emerge reddish-purple; yellow to red fall color
- Sometimes called Purpleblow
- Small, slow-growing tree reaching a mature eight of 25 to 30 feet
- Native to northern China, Russia, Japan, and Korea
- Small greenish-yellow flowers and small winged seed capsules
- Tolerant of heat, alkaline soils, and wide variance in temperatures
- Glossy green leaves keep their looks through the season
- Brilliant fall color ranging from yellow through orange to purple
- Good tree with a full crown, for small lawns and street use
- Much hardier than Japanese maple



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Pekin Lilac  
*Syringa reticulata*  
*ssp. pekinensis*



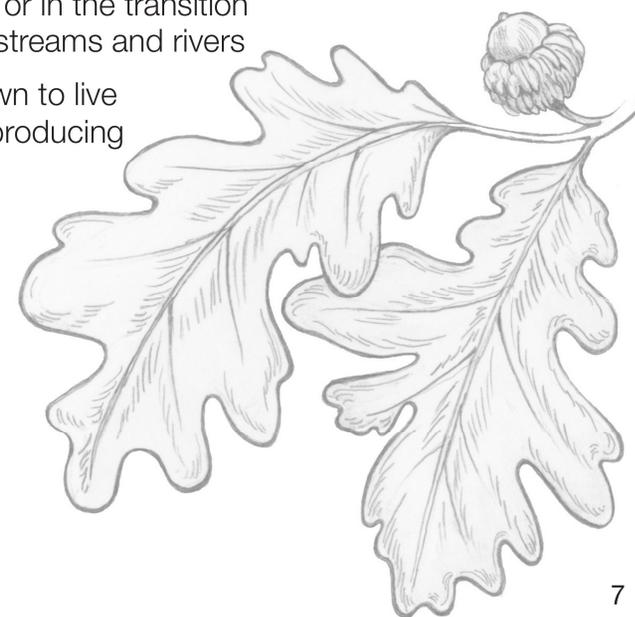
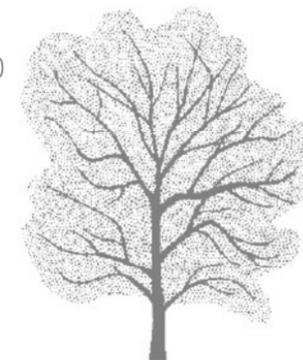
- Tree lilac with ivory-colored flower panicles up to 6 inches long, and handsome bark
- Small, often multi-stemmed, to 20 feet, with medium growth rate
- Native to northern China
- Masses of large fragrant white flowers from mid to late June
- Tree originated from single seed found in Gansu Province, People's Republic of China, in the 1920s
- Extremely resistant to adverse urban conditions
- Can also be observed along entrance walkway at Kauffman Gardens



Bur Oak  
*Quercus macrocarpa*

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- A handsome landscape tree with dark green glossy foliage
- Slow growing into a large tree, up to 80 feet at maturity
- Native from Nova Scotia to Pennsylvania and west to Manitoba and Texas
- Produces mostly covered nuts with an unusual fringed margin; called Mossy Overcup Oak for its unique acorn
- Known as "old dependable" by foresters due to the wide range of soil types it will tolerate, its straight trunk for wood, and its height for urban shade and beauty
- Often found as the transition between prairie and forest or in the transition woodlands near streams and rivers
- Has been known to live over 400 years, producing fruit its whole life

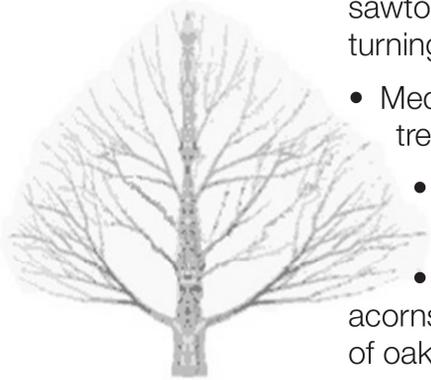


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## Sawtooth Oak

*Quercus accutissima*

- A handsome landscape tree with sawtoothed leaves emerging yellow and turning to glossy green thereafter
- Medium growth rate yielding a 60 foot tree at maturity
  - Native to Japan, Korea, China, and the Himalayas
  - Catkins in spring and 1-inch acorns in fall; one of the shorter species of oak
  - One of the heaviest acorn-producing oaks, so favored by wildlife that it is difficult for growers to collect acorns
  - Very sturdy, with no disease or insect pest issues



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## Amur Maackia

*Maackia amurensis*

- Exceptional white and fragrant summer flowers
- Slow-growing small tree to 30 feet in cultivation, but larger in the wild
- Native to the Amur River region of Manchuria
- White flowers give rise to 3-inch flat, brown seed pods
- Useful urban tree; tough but slow-growing
- A member of the legume family; roots support nitrogen fixing bacteria
- Introduced to the U.S. from northeast Asia in late 19th century, but still fairly rare
- Relative of black locust, with similar compound leaves
- Silky hairs on emerging spring leaves give tree a silvery-grey appearance



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## Seven-son *Heptacodium miconioides*



- Creamy-white flowers followed by showy, rose-purple sepals
- Fast-growing, often multi-stemmed small tree to 25 feet
- Native to Zhejiang province of China
- Attractive peeling bark
- Flowers occur in late summer, seven buds per stem, hence the common name and genus: Hepta means seven, codium refers to flower head
- Beautiful exfoliating bark; rose-purple calyces are a bonus second show after bloom



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## Amur Cork *Phellodendron amurense*



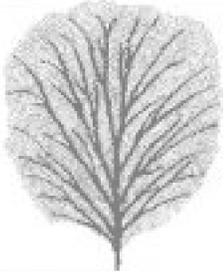
- Striking bark texture in old age
- Medium-sized tree with medium growth rate to a mature height of 45 feet
- Native to northern China, Manchuria, and Japan
- Has yellowish green flowers in late spring, giving rise to half-inch black fruit
- Once established, a low maintenance, drought and pollution tolerant shade tree suitable for urban landscapes
- Considered invasive in parts of the northeastern United States



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Zelkova  
*Zelkova serrata*

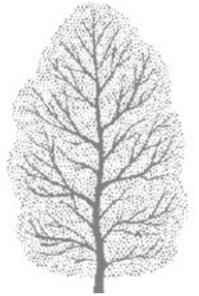
- Handsome tree with good foliage and high resistance to Dutch elm disease
- Medium growth rate producing a medium to large 50- to 80-foot tree at maturity
- Native to Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Manchuria
- Inconspicuous flowers give rise to quarter-inch seed pods
- Easily grown as a shade or street tree in average, well-drained soil
- Noted for its graceful shape, clean foliage and attractive bark



Big Leaf Magnolia  
*Magnolia macrophylla*

- Huge leaves; creamy white flowers 12-inches across
- Moderately fast-growing, large tree to 60 feet
- Native from Ohio to Florida and west to Arkansas and Louisiana
- Fragrant flowers with purple centers, developing into rose-red fruit
- May take 12 years or more to bloom
- Leaves green above, silvery-gray below; largest simple leaf of any native tree
- Intolerant of most urban pollutants
- Pollinated by beetles, which predate bees and butterflies, proving it is a primitive tree

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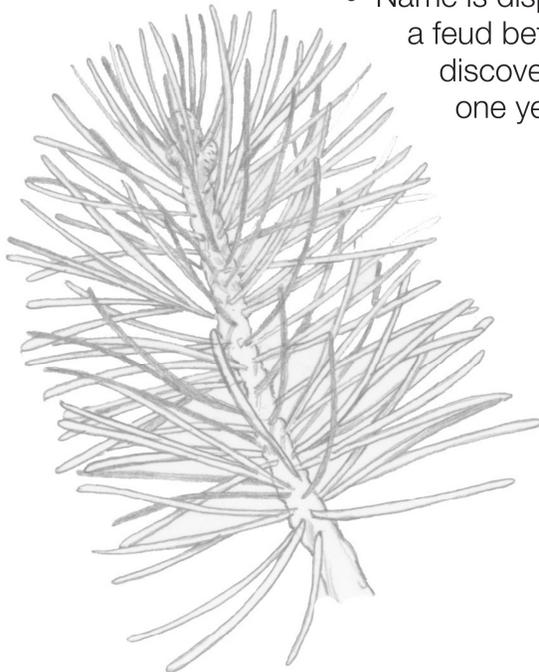
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Bosnian Pine  
*Pinus heldreichii*  
*var. leucodermis*



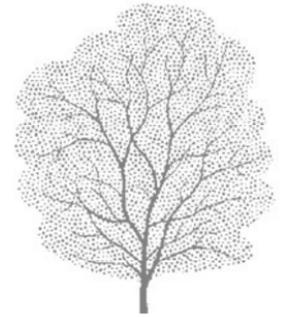
- Attractive evergreen with a cone-shaped habit and bicolored gray and yellow bark
- Small tree with a moderate growth rate to 30 feet
- Native to the Balkan peninsula and southern Italy
- Bears 3- to 5-inch yellow-brown cones
- Extremely durable, but slow-growing
- Hardy to -45 degrees and wind-resistant; one of the best of its type for the Midwest

- Name is disputed due to a feud between two discoverers, one year apart

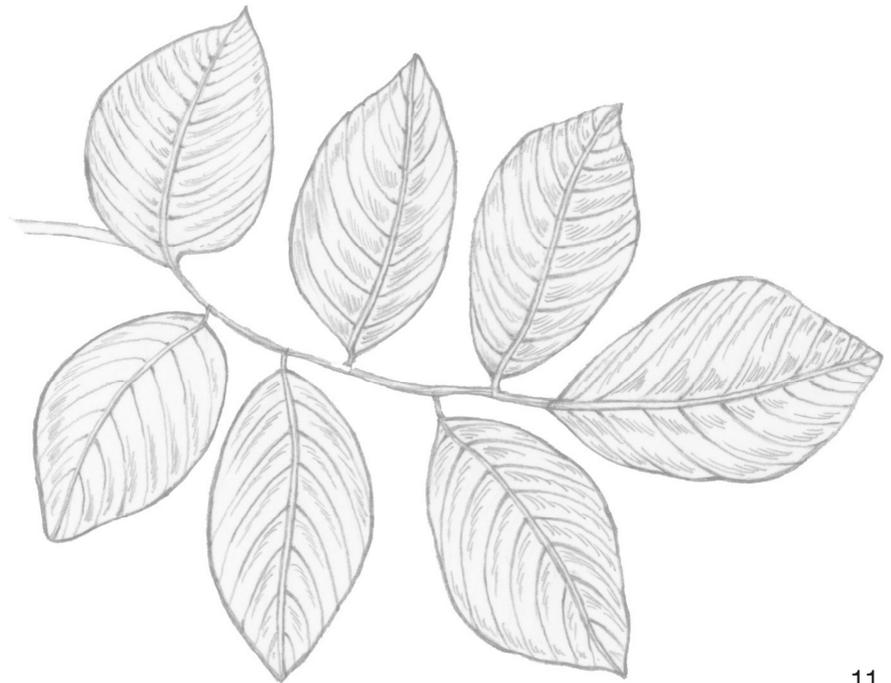


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Yellowwood  
*Cladrastis kentukea*



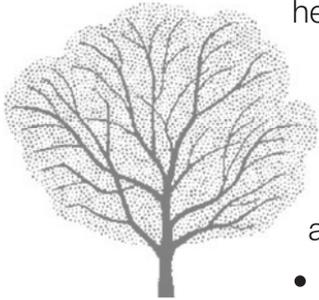
- Desirable flowering shade tree, especially for smaller spaces
- Medium-sized tree with a medium growth rate to 50 feet
- Native from North Carolina to Kentucky and Tennessee, but widely scattered elsewhere
- Fragrant white flowers that give rise to 4-inch brown pods.
- Tendrils of intensely fragrant, wisteria-like white flowers in long, drooping terminal panicles 10-15 inches long
- Has yellow, dye-coloring heartwood



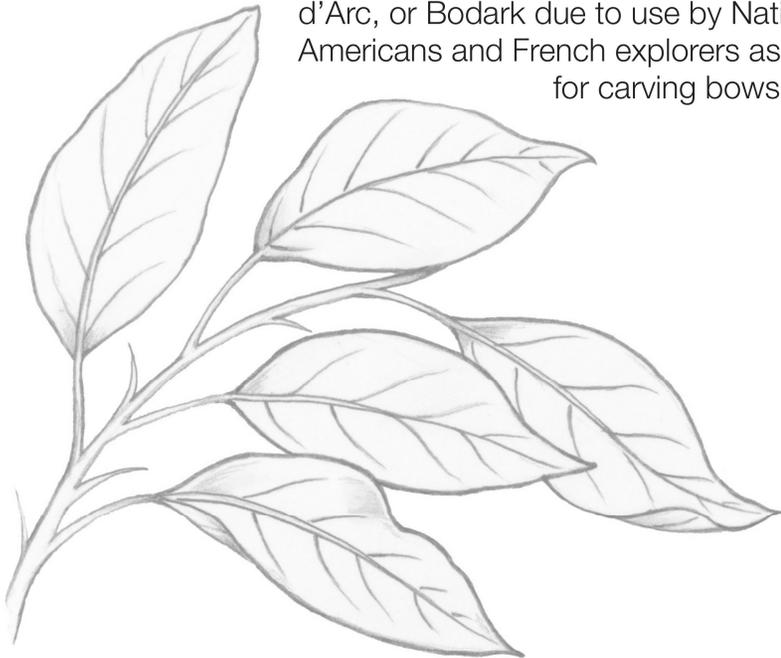
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## Osage Orange

*Maclura pomifera*



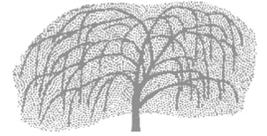
- Widely used by early settlers for hedgerows in the plains states; hedgerows exist in all 48 contiguous states
  - Fast-growing, medium-sized tree to 40 feet at maturity; rot-resistant wood
  - Native from Arkansas to Oklahoma and Texas, but now more widespread
- Inconspicuous flowers give rise to 4- to 6-inch hard, bumpy yellow-green fruit
- Instrumental to the settling of the West; also used for fence posts after barbed wire was invented; vital windbreak planted by early settlers
- Sometimes called Bowwood, Bois d'Arc, or Bodark due to use by Native Americans and French explorers as wood for carving bows



## Weeping European Hornbeam

*Carpinus betulus 'Pendula'*

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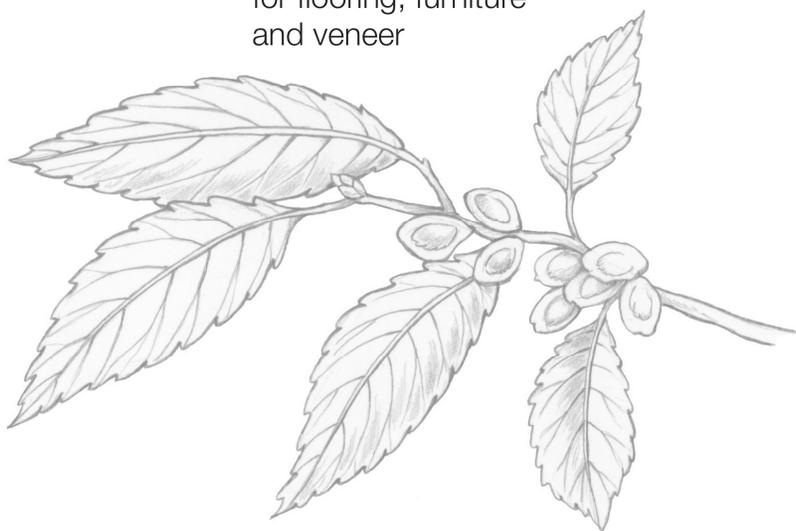
- Architectural form with clean, dark green leaves and yellowish late fall color
- Slow to medium growth rate; up to 40 feet high at maturity
- Native to Europe, Asia Minor, and southeast England
- 1- to 3-inch catkins in spring and tiny nuts in fall
- Often used for bonsai
- Originated in Austria, planted by Emperor Franz Josef at Hapsburg Palace



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## Lacebark Elm *Ulmus parvifolia*

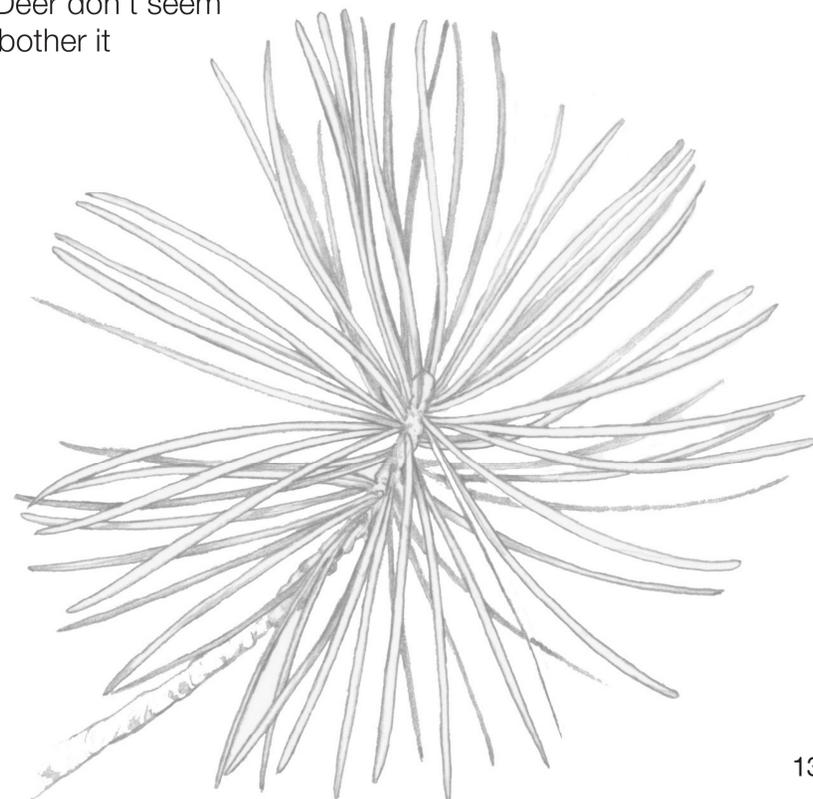
- Outstanding landscape tree with resistance to Dutch elm diseases
- Medium to fast growth rate yielding a medium-sized tree to 50 feet
- Native to northern and central China, Korea, and Japan
- Bears small flowers in late summer and early fall, and produces small seed pods
- Unique bark, mottled with dark gray, reddish brown and cream areas, creating a lacework effect
- Popular choice as a bonsai specimen
- Wood of superior hardness, toughness and resistance to splitting; said to be one of the best of all woods for chisel handles and the like
- Handsome wood grain makes it usable for flooring, furniture and veneer



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## Lacebark Pine *Pinus bungeana*

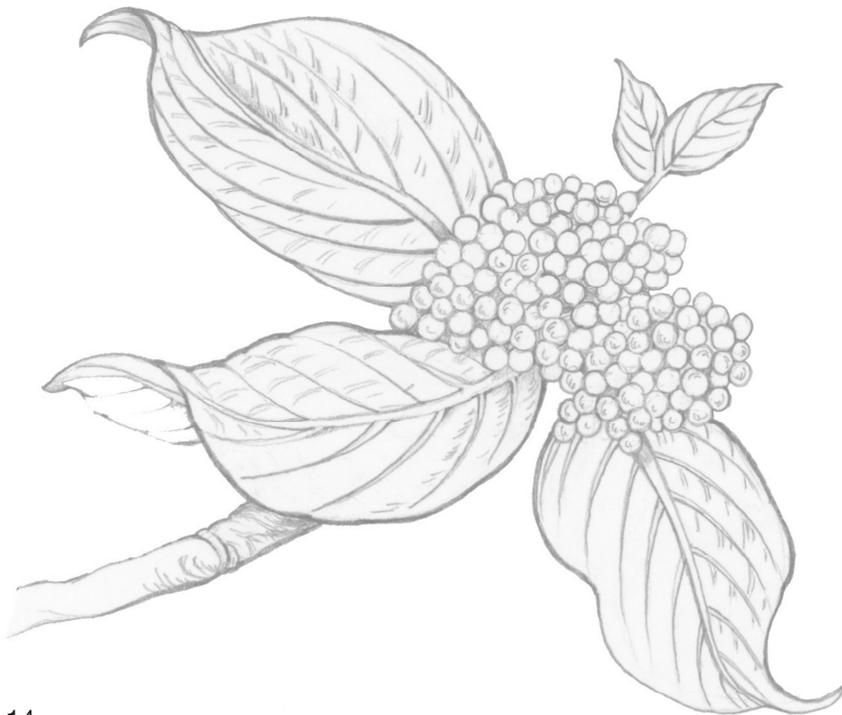
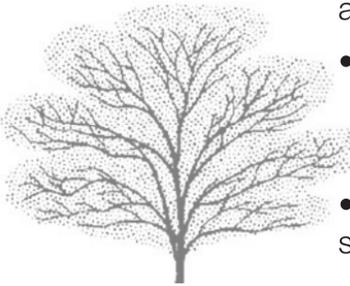
- Patches of exfoliating bark, making it very attractive
- Very slow-growing medium-sized tree eventually reaching a mature height of 50 feet
- Native to China
- Tiny flowers; produces 2- to 3-inch pale, yellowish-brown cones
- Can take 10 years before the bark begins to peel
- Drought tolerant
- Deer don't seem to bother it



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## Giant Dogwood *Cornus controversa*

- Horizontally branched with very attractive half-inch white flowers
- Fast growing for a dogwood; can reach height of 45 feet in cultivation
- Native to Japan and China
- White flowers in spring, then blue, spherical quarter-inch fruit
- In bloom, one of the showiest of the species with its white flowers
- Sometimes called the Wedding Cake Tree due to its distinctive tiered branching pattern



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## Paperbark Maple *Acer griseum*

- Outstanding red leaf color in late fall
- Superb cinnamon-colored bark peels away to reveal orange bark
- Slow-growing small tree, often multi-stemmed, reaching a 30-foot height in cultivation
- Native to central China
- Small, sparse flowers and 1.5-inch winged seed pods
- Has earned the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit
- Popular bonsai subject, especially in Europe

