

A Simple Key to Trees in NW Michigan
Page numbers correspond to "Field Guide to Northwest Michigan" (GRNA, 2016)



START

- If the tree has **broad flat leaves**, _____ Go to #1
If the tree has **needles or scale-like leaves**, _____ Go to #20
1. Leaves and buds are **opposite** _____ Go to #2
1. Leaves and buds are **alternate** _____ Go to #5
2. Leaves are **compound** _____ **Ash** (p.46)
2. Leaves are **simple** _____ Go to #3
3. Notches between lobes of leaves are **V-shaped**:
-toothed edges, reddish twigs _____ **Red Maple** (p.44)
-very deeply lobed, silver on underside of leaf _____ **Silver Maple**
3. Notches between lobes are **U-shaped**, no teeth on edges, brownish twigs _____ Go to #4
4. **Milky sap** in leaf stalk, base of leaf flat _____ **Norway Maple**
4. **Clear sap** in leaf stalk, base of leaf curved _____ **Sugar Maple** (p.44)
5. Leaves are **compound** _____ Go to #6
5. Leaves are **simple** _____ Go to #11
6. Leaf margins **not toothed**, leaflets rounded _____ **Black Locust** (p.45)
6. Leaf margins **toothed** _____ Go to #7
7. Twigs are covered with **fuzz**, crushed leaf has milky juice _____ **Staghorn Sumac** (p.49)
7. Twigs have **no fuzz**, no milky juice in crushed leaf _____ Go to #8
8. Crushed leaf aromatic, most leaves have more than 11 leaflets _____ **Black Walnut** (p.45)
8. Crushed leaf is not aromatic and leaves have 11 or fewer leaflets _____ **Hickory** (p.45)
11. Leaf margin is **toothed** or doubly toothed _____ Go to #12
11. Leaf margin is **lobed** on some leaves, not toothed _____ Go to #19
12. Teeth on leaf margin are all about the **same size** _____ Go to #13
12. Teeth on leaf margin are both **small and large** _____ Go to #17
13. Smooth gray bark, each leaf vein ends in a big pointed tooth _____ **American Beech** (p.40)
13. Bark is not smooth, many small teeth _____ Go to #14
14. **Flattened** and long leaf stalk:
-rounded leaf base, small teeth _____ **Quaking Aspen** (p.43)
-rounded leaf base, big teeth _____ **Big-toothed Aspen** (p.43)
-flattened leaf base, triangular shape _____ **Eastern Cottonwood** (p.43)
14. **Rounded** and shorter leaf stalk _____ Go to #15

15. Base of leaf is **lopsided** or asymmetrical, **heart-shaped** _____ **Basswood** (p.42)
15. Base of leaf is **symmetrical**, leaf veins similar _____ Go to #16
16. Leaves are very **narrow** and long _____ **Willow** (p.42)
16. Leaves are more broad and **rounded**:
- Leaf is firm, brownish hairs along underside of midrib _____ **Black Cherry** (p.42)
 - Stunted thorns, look more like blunt twigs; downy leaves _____ **Apple** (p.42)
 - very smooth gray bark, small tree or shrub _____ **Serviceberry** (p.47)
17. The bark of older trees has horizontal lines, **paper-like** and peeling _____ **Birch** (p.40-41)
17. There are no horizontal lines on bark, bark is **not** paper-like ___ Go to #18
18. Leaf base is **symmetrical**
- The bark is smooth & gray, leaf veins not branched on end _____ **Musclewood** (p.41)
 - The bark is shaggy, leaf veins brached toward ends _____ **Hop Hornbeam** (p.41)
18. Leaf base is **lopsided** or asymmetrical _____ **Elm** (p.41)
19. Tips of leaf lobes are sharply pointed _____ **Red Oak** (p.40)
19. Tips of leaf lobes are rounded _____ **White Oak** (p.40)
20. The tree has **needles** _____ Go to #21
20. The tree has **scale-like** leaves _____ Go to #25
21. The needles are in **bundles** _____ Go to #22
21. The needles are **single** _____ Go to #23
22. Long needles in bundles of 5 _____ **White Pine** (p.39)
22. Long needles in bundles of 2 _____ **Red Pine** (p.39)
22. Short needles in circular tufts, soft, shed in winter _____ **Tamarack** (p.37)
23. The needles are 4-sided (can be twirled between fingers) _____ **Spruce** (p.37-38)
23. The needles are flattened _____ Go to #24
24. Needles flat, about 1 inch long, two silver lines on underside, cones upright 1-3", bark with horizontal lines & resin blisters, fragrant when crushed _____ **Balsam Fir** (p.37)
24. Needles flat but short, only 1/2", flexible, white beneath, small 3.4" cones, scaly bark _____ **Eastern Hemlock** (p.39)
25. The scales are rounded _____ **Red Cedar** (p.36)
25. The scales are flattened _____ **White Cedar** (p.37)