

# Patapsco Valley State Park

## Medicine Tree Trail

Welcome to Patapsco Valley State Park and the Medicine Tree Trail. Trees are one of Patapsco Valley State Park's most important and bountiful natural resources. Within the park's 14,000 acres grows a very diverse population of tree species. Learn how to identify some of these species by walking the Medicine Tree Trail's .3 mile loop. This interpretive hike allows you to identify nine tree species strategically marked along the trail. Match the post numbers along the trail with the images and descriptions provided. Check your answers using the key on the back of this brochure.

To identify trees, examining leaf shapes is especially helpful. Below are some terms to help you better understand the descriptions:

**Terminal Bud:** at ends of twigs, often with scales like fish

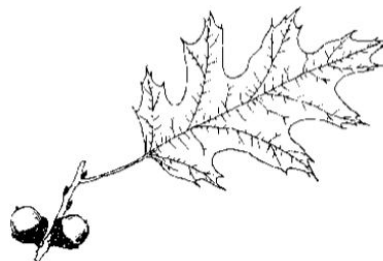
**Axial Bud:** in the notch between the leaf stem and branch

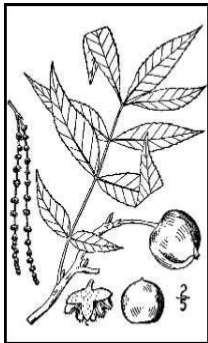
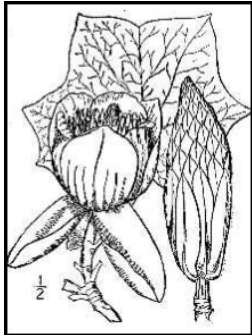

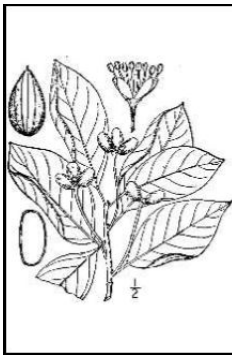
**Simple leaf:** a single leaf blade with an axial bud

**Compound Leaf:** divided into leaflets that have no axial bud

**Lobed:** irregular wavy contour of leaf shape

**Toothed:** leaf edges like a saw blade



<p><b>POST</b> _____</p> <p><b><u>Bitternut Hickory</u></b> (<i>Carya Cordiformis</i>)</p> <p><b>Leaves:</b> Alternate, compound seven to eleven leaflets</p> <p><b>Twigs:</b> slender, hairless</p> <p><b>Bark:</b> gray, tight shallow furrows</p> <p><b>Fruit:</b> round nut with sharp-pointed tip</p> <p><b>Flower:</b> Male: three yellow hanging catkins; female: small, green</p> 	<p><b>POST</b> _____</p> <p><b><u>Tulip Poplar</u></b> (<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>)</p> <p><b>Leaves:</b> Alternate, simple, palmate, four-lobed</p> <p><b>Twigs:</b> Red-brown, shiny or waxy</p> <p><b>Bark:</b> gray-green with white-topped furrows</p> <p><b>Fruit:</b> Cone-like</p> <p><b>Flower:</b> Large, yellow with orange, tulip-like in shape</p> 
<p><b>POST</b> _____</p> <p><b><u>American Beech</u></b> (<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>)</p> <p><b>Leaves:</b> alternate, simple, distinctly toothed, waxy</p> <p><b>Twigs:</b> light brown, zig-zagged</p> <p><b>Bark:</b> smooth, thin, gray</p> <p><b>Fruit:</b> nuts, small and triangular</p> <p><b>Flower:</b> male: small, hanging; female: grown from shorter spikes</p> 	<p><b>POST</b> _____</p> <p><b><u>Black Gum</u></b> (<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>)</p> <p><b>Leaves:</b> Alternate, simple, oblong</p> <p><b>Twigs:</b> Stout, brown-red to gray</p> <p><b>Bark:</b> Gray-brown, irregularly furrowed</p> <p><b>Fruit:</b> Dark, purple-blue</p> <p><b>Flower:</b> Not showy, light green clusters appearing with leaves</p> 

POST \_\_\_\_\_

**American Hornbeam** (*Carpinus caroliniana*)

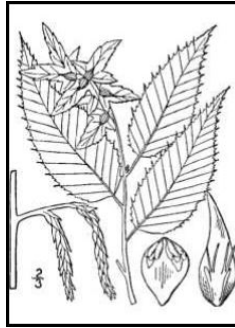
**Leaves:** alternate, simple, doubly serrated, waxy

**Twigs:** slender, brown to gray

**Bark:** thin, smooth, bluish gray; heavily fluted trunk

**Fruit:** small nut hanging from long, leafy stalk

**Flower:** hanging catkins



POST \_\_\_\_\_

**White Oak** (*Quercus alba*)

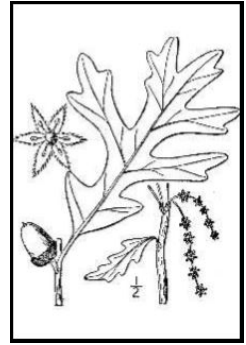
**Leaves:** Alternate, simple, seven to ten finger-like lobes

**Twig:** Hairless, red-brown, multiple round buds

**Bark:** whitish or ashy-gray, irregular, blocky

**Fruit:** Acorn

**Flower:** Male: yellow-green catkins; female: redish, spike-like



POST \_\_\_\_\_

**Flowering Dogwood** (*Cornus florida*)

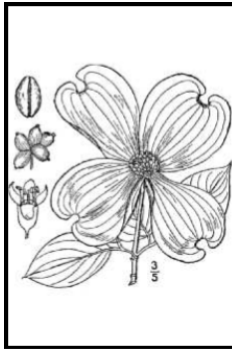
**Leaves:** opposite, simple, slightly wavy, pale below

**Twigs:** green or purple (purple on sunlit side)

**Bark:** gray, scaly, blocky

**Fruit:** shiny, oval, red, clusters of three to five

**Flower:** four showy, large white bracts



**Answer Key:**

1. Flowering Dogwood, 2. White Oak, 3. American Hornbeam, 4. American Beech, 5. Black Gum, 6. Tulip Poplar, 7. Hickory



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