



Teardrop




Callery Pear
Pyrus calleryana



Leaves are tough and waxy

Narrowleaf Cottonwood *



Populus angustifolia

Narrow leaves with a very short, round petiole; MT, NM, WY

Mulberry
Morus cultivars



Leaf shape varies: may be mitten-shaped or have three (3) to five (5) lobes

Japanese Zelkova
Zelkova serrata



Bark has lenticels; tree is tightly vase-shaped

Lanceleaf Cottonwood *



Populus x acuminata

A naturally occurring hybrid between *P. deltoides* and *P. angustifolia*; MT, NM, WY

European Birch
Betula pendula



Weeping form; bark has lenticels

Paper Birch
Betula papyrifera



Bark peels off in papery sheets; MT, WY

River Birch
Betula nigra



More resistant to bronze birch borer; reddish-brown bark

Cornelian Cherry
Cornus mas



Also known as cornelian cherry dogwood

Cucumber Magnolia
Magnolia acuminata




Large, fuzzy, silver buds

Osage Orange
Maclura pomifera



Large fruit is generally considered inedible; thornless and fruitless cultivars commonly planted

Broom



Bristlecone Pine * **Limber Pine** * **White Pine**




Pinus aristata *Pinus flexilis* *Pinus strobus*

Five (5) needles per bundle; white resin flecks on needles; NM

Five (5) needles per bundle; twigs are very flexible; MT, NM, WY

Five (5) needles per bundle; blue-green needles

Austrian Pine **Ponderosa Pine** * **Scots Pine** **Pinyon Pine** * **Western Larch** **European Larch**



Pinus nigra *Pinus ponderosa* *Pinus sylvestris* *Pinus edulis* *Larix occidentalis* *Larix decidua*

Two (2) stiff needles per bundle

Two (2) and three (3) needles per bundle; 5-10"; MT, NM, WY


Two (2) needles per bundle; orange bark

Two (2) needles per bundle; occasionally one (1) or three (3); NM, WY


Fifteen (15) + needles per spur; cones lack extended bracts of western larch; MT, WY

Fifteen (15) + needles per spur; drops needles in fall; cones lack extended bracts of western larch; MT, WY

Feather



Dawn Redwood **Bald Cypress** **White Fir** * **Subalpine Fir** *



Metasequoia glyptostroboides *Taxodium distichum* *Abies concolor* *Abies lasiocarpa*


Strong pyramidal shape; leaves drop in fall

Alternate leaf arrangement; leaves drop in fall

Flat upward curving needles; NM, WY

Narrow, steeply-shaped crown; smooth gray bark with resin blisters; MT, NM, WY

Black Hills Spruce **Engelmann Spruce** * **Blue Spruce** * **Norway Spruce** **Douglas-fir** *



Picea glauca 'Densata' *Picea engelmannii* *Picea pungens* *Picea abies* *Pseudotsuga menziesii*

Short needles; small cone; native to the Black Hills of WY and SD

Short needles; smallest cone; young twigs are pubescent; MT, NM, WY

Needles stiff, sharp, and square in cross-section; MT, NM, WY

Large hanging cones

*"Mouse tail" cone bracts; MT, NM, WY

Spade



Eastern Cottonwood * **Quaking Aspen** *




Populus deltoides *Populus tremuloides*

Leaf base is truncated (flattened); geographic varieties like plains and Rio Grande are native throughout all RMC states

Rounded leaves; flat petiole; MT, NM, WY

Canada Red Chokecherry **Northern Catalpa** **Eastern Redbud**



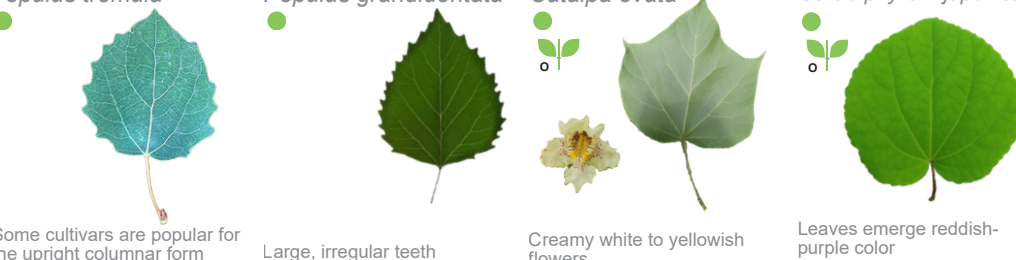
Prunus virginiana 'Canada Red' *Catalpa speciosa* *Cercis canadensis*

Smooth gray bark has lenticels; leaves out green, then turns purplish-red

Leaf arrangement is whorled but may appear opposite

Flowers and fruit emerge directly from branches

European Aspen **Big-tooth Aspen** **Chinese Catalpa** **Katsura Tree**



Populus tremula *Populus grandidentata* *Catalpa ovata* *Cercidiphyllum japonicum*


Some cultivars are popular for the upright columnar form

Large, irregular teeth

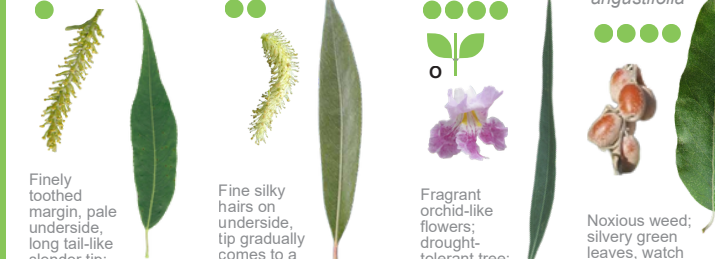
Creamy white to yellowish flowers

Leaves emerge reddish-purple color

Lance



Peachleaf Willow * **Weeping Willow** **Desert Willow** **Russian Olive**



Salix amygdaloides *Salix alba* *Chilopsis linearis* *Elaeagnus angustifolia*

Finely toothed margin; pale underside; long tail-like slender tip; MT, NM, WY

Fine silky hairs on underside; tip gradually comes to a point

Fragrant orchid-like flowers; drought-tolerant tree; NM

Noxious weed; silvery green leaves; watch for thorns

Compound Hand



Boxelder * **Paperbark Maple**



Acer negundo *Acer griseum*

Seedless cultivars are available; MT, NM, WY

Cinnamon-colored bark peels

Ohio Buckeye **Yellow Buckeye** **Horsechestnut**



Aesculus glabra *Aesculus flava* *Aesculus hippocastanum*

Buds are scaly, gray, not sticky

Husk is not spiny like Ohio

Large brown buds are sticky

Compound Line



White Ash **Kentucky Coffeetree** **Golden Raintree** **Tree of Heaven** **Black Locust**



Fraxinus americana *Gymnocladus dioica* *Koelerutaria paniculata* *Ailanthus altissima* *Robinia pseudoacacia*

'Autumn Purple' is a popular cultivar known for its fall color


Very sparsely branched; large bipinnately compound leaves

Irregular growth habit

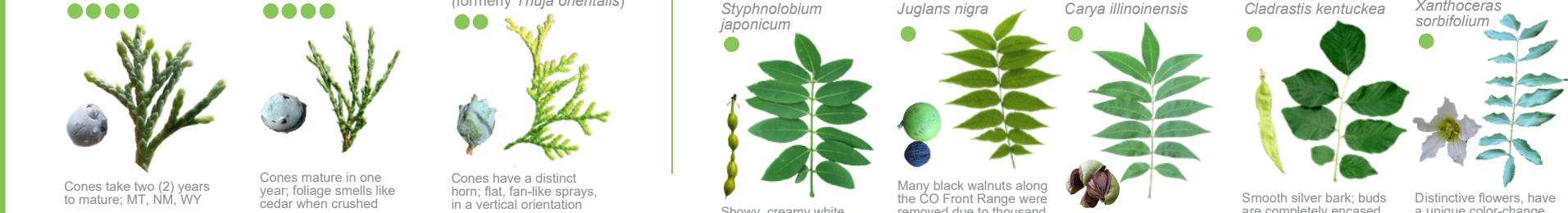
Noxious weed; leaf smells awful when bruised

Watch for paired spines at the base of the leaves; showy, white flowers; smooth seed pods

Scales



Japanese Pagodatree **Black Walnut** **Pecan** **Kentucky Yellowwood** **Yellowhorn**



Styphnolobium japonicum *Juglans nigra* *Carya illinoensis* *Cladrastis kentuckea* *Xanthoxerces sorbifolium*

Showy, creamy-white pea-shaped flowers

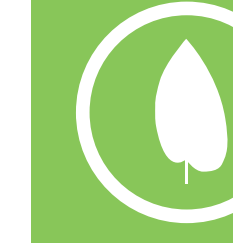
Many black walnuts along the CO Front Range were removed due to thousand cankers disease

Sickle-shaped leaflets

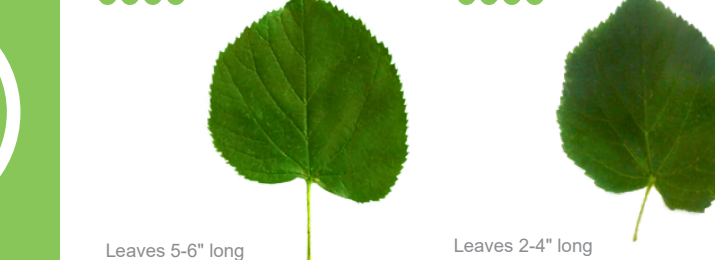
Smooth silver bark; buds are completely encased by leaf petiole

Distinctive flowers; have a unique color-change mechanism

Uneven



American Linden **Littleleaf Linden**



Tilia americana *Tilia cordata*

Leaves 5-6" long

Leaves 2-4" long

Silver Linden **Linden Fruits** **Japanese Treelilac**




Tilia tomentosa

Leaves 2-5" long; white and hairy underneath

All three Linden species in this guide have similar clusters of fragrant flowers (which turn into seeds) attached to a leaf-like blade

Prominent lenticels on bark; persistent seed capsules

American Elm **Siberian Elm** **David Elm** **Chinese Elm**



Ulmus americana *Ulmus pumila* *Ulmus davidiana* var. *japonica* *Ulmus parvifolia*

Large leaves, doubly serrated margins; MT, WY

Small leaves, overall form of tree is less uniform

4" long leaves, young bark is smooth, fruit is hairless

Sandpappy leaf; tricolor calico patchwork bark

Common Hackberry



Celtis occidentalis

Sandpappy leaf, often found with hackberry nipple galls; warty silver bark; MT, WY

Compound Line



Honeylocust **Green Ash**



Gleditsia triacanthos var. *inermis* *Fraxinus pennsylvanica*

Bipinnately compound leaves; tree may have long, green or brown, twisting bean pods

The leaf scar is semi-circular with a top edge that is nearly straight across; other species wrap around the bud; WY

White Ash **Kentucky Coffeetree** **Golden Raintree** **Tree of Heaven** **Black Locust**



Fraxinus americana *Gymnocladus dioica* *Koelerutaria paniculata* *Ailanthus altissima* *Robinia pseudoacacia*

'Autumn Purple' is a popular cultivar known for its fall color

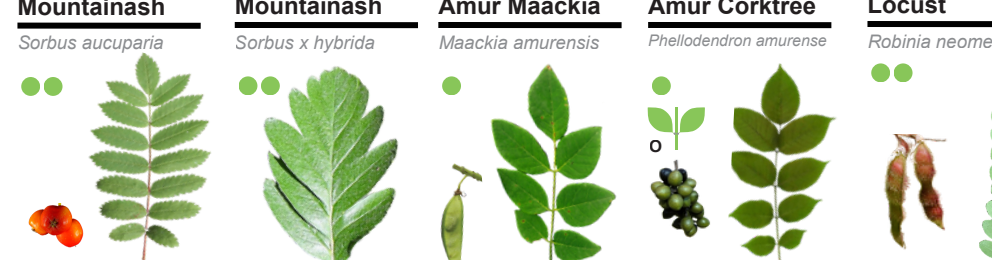
Very sparsely branched; large bipinnately compound leaves

Irregular growth habit

Noxious weed; leaf smells awful when bruised

Watch for paired spines at the base of the leaves; showy, white flowers; smooth seed pods

European Mountainash **Oak-leaf Mountainash** **Amur Maackia** **Amur Corktree** **New Mexico Locust** *



Sorbus aucuparia *Sorbus x hybrida* *Maackia amurensis* *Phellodendron amurense* *Robinia neomexicana*

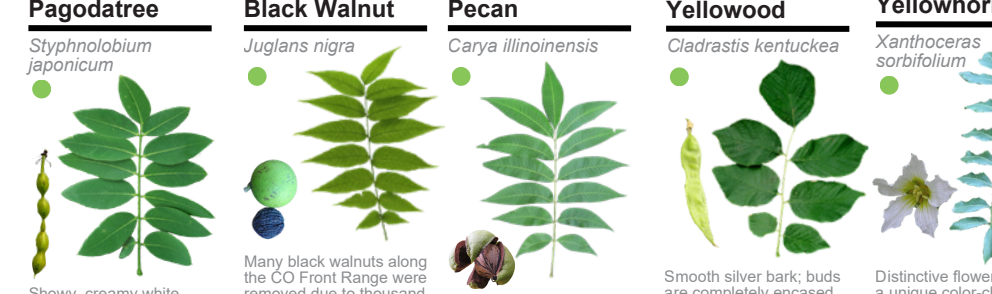
Not a true ash and is not susceptible to emerald ash borer

Twigs are green

Bark is spongy, like cork

Watch for spines; showy, pink flowers; hairy seed pods; NM

Japanese Pagodatree **Black Walnut** **Pecan** **Kentucky Yellowwood** **Yellowhorn**



Styphnolobium japonicum *Juglans nigra* *Carya illinoensis* *Cladrastis kentuckea* *Xanthoxerces sorbifolium*

Showy, creamy-white pea-shaped flowers

Many black walnuts along the CO Front Range were removed due to thousand cankers disease

Sickle-shaped leaflets

Smooth silver bark; buds are completely encased by leaf petiole

Distinctive flowers; have a unique color-change mechanism

Oak



Bur Oak **Northern Red Oak**

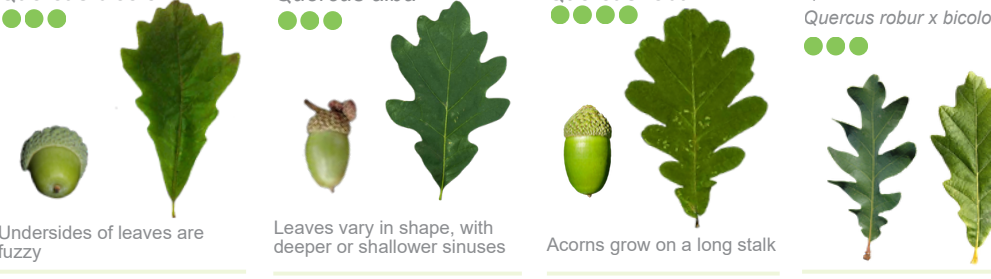


Quercus macrocarpa *Quercus rubra*

Deeply furrowed, corky, grayish-brown bark; MT, WY

Acorn is flat-topped with shallow cap

Swamp White Oak **White Oak** **English Oak** **English Oak hybrids**



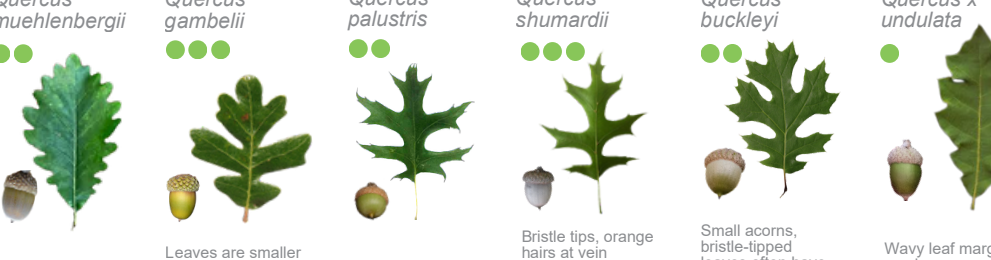
Quercus bicolor *Quercus alba* *Quercus robur* *Quercus robur x alba* *Quercus robur x bicolor*

Undersides of leaves are fuzzy

Leaves vary in shape, with deeper or shallower sinuses

Acorns grow on a long stalk

Chinkapin Oak **Gambel Oak** * **Pin Oak** **Shumard Oak** **Texas Red Oak** **Wavyleaf Oak**



Quercus muehlenbergii *Quercus gambelii* *Quercus palustris* *Quercus shumardii* *Quercus buckleyi* *Quercus x undulata*

Small acorns; light green, hairy underneath

Leaves are smaller (2-4") typically grows as a shrub; NM, WY

Deeply lobed sinuses

Bristle tips, orange hairs at vein intersections on underside of leaves

Small acorns, bristle-tipped leaves often have narrow lobes and wide sinuses

Wavy leaf margin, semi-evergreen leaves; variable lobing; NM

This guide was adapted from the New York City Street Tree ID Guide and revised to reflect tree species commonly planted or encountered in parks, streetscapes, and developed landscapes across Colorado, Montana, New Mexico, and Wyoming. It is designed to help identify trees adapted to the Rocky Mountain region, including native and ornamental trees.



The original NY City Street Tree ID Guide document can be found here: <https://www.nycgovparks.org/pagefiles/144/Street-Tree-ID-Guide-2019-Subcompact.pdf>. For more information, visit nyc.gov/street-trees.

Digital Copy available on the ISA RMC Public Resources webpage. Print Copies can be purchased through ISA RMC. Editing for regional accuracy by the ISA RMC BOB.

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ISA RMC Version 1.0 - February 2026

Rocky Mountain Landscape Tree Identification Guide
Common Urban Trees of Colorado • Montana • New Mexico • Wyoming

Benefits Of Trees

- Cooler Neighborhoods: Reduce heat and lower energy bills.
- Cleaner Air & Water: Capture pollutants and filter stormwater.
- Stronger Communities: Green streets boost mental well-being and neighborhood pride.
- Wildlife Habitat: Urban trees support native birds, pollinators, and small mammals.
- Climate Resilience: Shade, carbon storage, and drought adaptation support healthy communities.
- Property Value: Well-maintained trees can increase real estate value.

Planting Trees - Quick Guide

Use a simple step-by-step process

1. Dig a shallow hole 2x as wide as the root ball.
2. Remove all burlap, wire, and container material.
3. Set root flare at or slightly above ground level.
4. Backfill with original soil; avoid amendments.
5. Water slowly and deeply after planting.
6. Add 2-4" mulch, keeping it away from the trunk.

Caring For Trees After Planting

Care and maintenance of your tree, after planting for the first 3-5 years, is crucial for its establishment in the landscape. For a long-lived, healthy tree, follow the guidance below and adopt a routine tree care plan.

Watering

- Slow, deep watering once a week in summer (more often for establishing trees).
- Water once a month in winter during dry spells.

Mulching

- Use mulch (organic preferred, e.g., wood chips or bark mulch).
- Keep mulch off the trunk and avoid "volcano mulching."

Pruning

- Prune young trees for structure; prune mature trees sparingly.
- Avoid pruning just before heavy snowfall.

Seasonal Tree Care Calendar

Spring: Plant, inspect, and prune lightly
Summer: Deep water, monitor pests
Fall: Replenish mulch as needed, prep for winter (fall is also a good time to plant trees)
Winter: Water monthly when dry and above 40°F

Denver Forestry has a great seasonal activity guide calendar ->

Homeowners can support young trees with good watering, mulching, and early pruning. But in Colorado's climate, where drought, sun exposure, and winter storms can stress mature trees, professional care is often needed.

For expert help or referrals, check with local nurseries, County Extension, your municipal forestry office, or a consulting arborist.

For major tree work, choose an ISA Certified Arborist®, trained to care for large trees safely.

ISA Tree Owner Resources




- Avoiding Tree and Utility Conflicts
- Tree Selection and Placement
- Insect and Disease Problems
- Proper Mulching Techniques
- Pruning Mature Trees
- Pruning Young Trees
- New Tree Planting
- Plant Health Care
- Trees and Turf

National Resources - Learn More

Urban & Community Forestry Society
<https://ufcsociety.org/community/>

Tree City USA Arbor Day Foundation
<https://www.arborday.com/en-us/web/tree-city-usa>

Find a professional at treesaregod.org ->

CO Native Tree Species

Rocky Mtn. Maple *
Acer glabrum

Boxelder *
Acer negundo

Thinleaf Alder *
Alnus tenuifolia

Douglas Hawthorn*
Crataegus douglasii & cultivars

Trunk and stems are smooth, especially when young; MT, NM, WY

Seedless cultivars are available; MT, NM, WY

Persistent fruits look like conifer cones; MT, NM, WY

Leaf shape varies depending on species; native species are found in all RMC states

Lanceleaf Cottonwood *
Populus x acuminata

Narrowleaf Cottonwood *
Populus angustifolia

Eastern Cottonwood *
Populus deltoides

Quaking Aspen *
Populus tremuloides

Naturally occurring hybrid between *P. deltoides* and *P. angustifolia*; MT, NM, WY

Narrow leaves with a very short, round petiole; MT, NM, WY

Leaf base is truncated; geographic varieties like plains and Rio Grande are native in all RMC states

Round leaves; flat petiole; MT, NM, WY

Chokecherry *
Prunus virginiana

Plum *
Prunus americana

Gambel Oak *
Quercus gambelii

New Mexico Locust *
Robinia neomexicana

Smooth bark has lenticels; long drooping racemes of white flowers; MT, NM, WY

Princess Kay is a commonly planted cultivar; MT, NM, WY

Leaves are 2-4", typically grows as a shrub; NM, WY

Watch for spines; showy, pink flowers; hairy seed pods; NM

Peachleaf Willow *
Salix amygdaloides

White Fir *
Abies concolor

Subalpine Fir *
Abies lasiocarpa

Rocky Mtn. Juniper *
Juniperus scopulorum

Engelmann Spruce *
Picea engelmannii

Finely toothed margins, pale underside, long tail-like slender tip; MT, NM, WY

Flat upward curving needles; NM, WY

Narrow, steeple-shaped crown; smooth gray bark with resin blisters; MT, NM, WY

Cones take two (2) years to mature; MT, NM, WY

Short needles; smallest cone; young twigs are pubescent; MT, NM, WY

Blue Spruce *
Picea pungens

Bristlecone Pine *
Pinus aristata

Pinyon Pine *
Pinus edulis

Limber Pine *
Pinus flexilis

Needles stiff, sharp, and square in cross-section; MT, NM, WY

Five (5) needles per bundle; white resin flecks on needles; NM

Cones produce large edible seeds commonly called "pine nuts"; NM, WY

Five (5) needles per bundle; twigs are very flexible; MT, NM, WY

Ponderosa Pine *
Pinus ponderosa

Douglas-fir *
Pseudotsuga menziesii

Two (2) and three (3) long needles per bundle; MT, NM, WY

"Mouse tail" cone bracts; MT, NM, WY

Tatarian Maple
Acer tataricum

Amur Maple
Acer ginnala

Hedge Maple
Acer campestre

Shantung Maple
Acer truncatum

Hollowings is a popular cultivar and the first Plant Select tree

Recently reclassified as a subspecies of *Acer tataricum*

Smooth, entire margins, rounded lobes and sinuses

Milky sap in the petiole; leaf base is truncated (squared-off)

Douglas Hawthorn *
Crataegus douglasii

White Poplar
Populus alba

Tulip Poplar
Lindodendron tulipifera

Ginkgo
Ginkgo biloba

Leaf shape varies depending on species; multiple native species are found in all RMC states

Leaf underside is covered in bright white woolly hairs

Bud shape is flat, duckbill-like; upright, cone-like aggregate of samaras

Whorled leaf arrangement; twigs are knobby

Turkish Hazelnut
Corylus colurna

American Sycamore
Platanus occidentalis

London Planetree
Platanus x acerifolia

Sweetgum
Liquidambar styraciflua

Hairy leaves; unique, spiky, and hairy nut cluster

Fruits are typically single on peduncle

Tan and greenish bark peels off and looks like camouflage

Spherical, spiky fruit clusters are hard and woody in texture

Football

Crabapple
Malus cultivars

Chokecherry *
Prunus virginiana

Purple Leaf Plum
Prunus cerasifera

A crabapple fruit is smaller than 2" diameter

Smooth bark has lenticels; long drooping racemes of white flowers; MT, NM, WY

May or may not produce fruit

Dogwood
Cornus controversa

European Beech
Fagus sylvatica

Smoketree
Cotinus coggygria

Hardy Rubber Tree
Eucommia ulmoides

Thin leaves; veins curve, running nearly parallel to the margin to the tip

Smooth silver bark; buds are long, slender, sharply pointed

Unique, billowy, hair-covered stalks on the spent flower clusters in summer

Leaves have white rubbery fluid inside

European Hornbeam
Carpinus betulus

American Hornbeam
Carpinus caroliniana

American Hophornbeam
Ostrya virginiana

Swedish Whitebeam
Scandosorbus intermedia

Light gray bark, smooth, with lenticels; young trees are columnar

Trunk looks distinctly muscular

Shaggy bark; hop-like fruit clusters; WY

Leaves have shallow lobes; formerly known as *Sorbus intermedia*

Apricot
Prunus armeniaca

Cherry
Prunus spp.

Peach
Prunus persica

Plum *
Prunus americana

Leaf shape is broad-ovate, with a rounded base and an abruptly pointed tip

Montmorency, Bing, and Nanking are cultivars that will produce fruit in CO

Leaves tend to droop from petiole, and fold upward along their central midrib.

Princess Kay is a commonly planted cultivar; MT, NM, WY

Norway Maple
Acer platanoides

Sugar Maple
Acer saccharum

Rocky Mtn. Maple *
Acer glabrum

Milky sap in petiole; five (5) lobes with pointed leaf tips

Three (3) to five (5) lobes with rounded leaf tips

Trunk and stems are smooth, especially when young; MT, NM, WY

Amur Maple
Acer ginnala

Hedge Maple
Acer campestre

Shantung Maple
Acer truncatum

Recently reclassified as a subspecies of *Acer tataricum*

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Crataegus douglasii

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Populus alba

Tulip Poplar
Lindodendron tulipifera

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Ginkgo biloba

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Corylus colurna

American Sycamore
Platanus occidentalis

London Planetree
Platanus x acerifolia

Sweetgum
Liquidambar styraciflua

Hairy leaves; unique, spiky, and hairy nut cluster

Fruits are typically single on peduncle

Tan and greenish bark peels off and looks like camouflage

Spherical, spiky fruit clusters are hard and woody in texture

Cockspur Hawthorn
Crataegus crusgalli

Serviceberry
Amelanchier grandiflora

Apple (Standard)
Malus cultivars

Small tree; long, sharp thorns - there are thornless varieties

Leaves emerge bronzy-purplish turning blue-green; native species are found in all RMC states

Produces fruit larger than 2" in diameter

Shingle Oak
Quercus imbricaria

Sawtooth Oak
Quercus acutissima

Saucer Magnolia
Magnolia x soulangeana

Entire margins; also known as laurel oak

Non-lobed shape with sharp, bristle-tipped teeth along the margins

Buds are large and fuzzy

Thinleaf Alder *
Alnus tenuifolia

Persian Ironwood
Parrotia persica

Lenticels

Persistent fruits look like conifer cones; MT, NM, WY

Persistent fruits look like conifer cones

Narrow pores on the bark of tree bark and branches

Amur Chokecherry
Prunus maackii

European Birdcherry
Prunus padus

Pear (Fruiting)
Pyrus spp.

Exfoliating, glossy, amber- to coppery-orange bark

Small tufts of white hairs along mid-rib on underside of leaf

Bartlett, Ussurian, and others are cold-hardy; producing fruit

Norway Maple
Acer platanoides

Sugar Maple
Acer saccharum

Rocky Mtn. Maple *
Acer glabrum

Milky sap in petiole; five (5) lobes with pointed leaf tips

Three (3) to five (5) lobes with rounded leaf tips

Trunk and stems are smooth, especially when young; MT, NM, WY

Watch out for

SPOTTED LANTERNFLY **EMERALD ASH BORER**

Contact your local Community Forestry Department, County Extension Office, or State Forest Service Urban & Community Forestry Program for new invasive pest detections

State Urban & Community Forestry Programs (ISA Rocky Mountain Chapter Region)

MT - <https://dnrc.mt.gov/forestry/Community-Local-Government/urban-and-community-forestry>

WY - <https://wfsd.wyo.gov/forestry-assistance-programs/community-forestry>

CO - <https://csfs.colostate.edu/forest-management/community-urban-forestry/>

NM - <https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/sfd/urban-and-community-forestry/>

How To Use This Guide

1 Common Name **Norway Maple ***

2 Species Name ***Acer platanoides***

3 Frequency ●●●●●

4 Leaf Arrangement ○

5 Leaf Image

6 ID Tips

7 Colorado Native

Very geometric leaves have milky sap in petiole

1 Common Name

You may know some species by a slightly different name. There's great variation in common names. This is why knowing the scientific name is important when speaking about plants.

2 Species Name

This is the unique, unvarying name that scientists use to refer to a species. These names can change as DNA sequencing information becomes more available, trees are reclassified.

3 Frequency

The green dots give an indication of how likely you are to see a tree of this species in communities along the Front Range of Colorado based on CO TreeView inventory data. (<https://cotreeview.com/coty/>, 2025).

4 Leaf Arrangement

This icon appears whenever leaves join directly across from each other on a twig in an Opposite branching pattern. While leaf shape varies within a species, the leaf arrangement is always the same.

5 Leaf Image

The leaf photos are a starting point for your identification. Use them to narrow down your best match, but don't worry if the leaf you're holding isn't an exact match to the one shown. Leaves on the same tree can vary with age and where they grow on a branch, and even trees of the same species can look different from one another. With practice, you'll become more confident in recognizing the key features that matter for identification.

6 ID Tips

Use these notes to help you distinguish between trees with similar leaves. For some species the fruits, seeds, bark, and branching shape may also be helpful.

7 CO Native Species *

Twenty-three Colorado native species are marked with a star and repeated in a standalone section for easy reference. Many of these trees also occur naturally across state lines within the ISA Rocky Mountain Chapter region. Native species not found in Colorado are identified in the feature notes with their respective state(s) (e.g., MT, NM, WY). Native status may vary by state within the region.

●●●●● Frequent
●●●●● Common
●●●●● Uncommon
●●●●● Rare

American Hornbeam
Carpinus caroliniana

Trunk looks distinctly muscular

Using Leaves To Identify Trees

Blade
The main body of the leaf

Lobe
Where the leaf blade curves in towards the midrib

Veins
When the leaf blade makes a contour towards the midrib

Midrib
The primary vein leading through the center of the leaf blade to the twig

Petiole
The stem-like part of the leaf that joins to the twig

Leaf Shapes

This guide organizes the most common leaf shapes into twelve (12) broad categories, indicated in green squares.

Spade

Some leaves may blur the boundaries between categories, so if you're not confident in your ID, check to see if it's listed in a different category.

Alternate v Opposite

One of the best things you can learn in order to quickly narrow down potential ID matches. Leaves may vary on different parts of a tree or on two trees of the same species, but Leaf Arrangement never changes. These are the two main arrangements you will see:

A Alternate
Leaves alternate between joining on the left and right sides of the twig.

O Opposite
Leaves join the twig immediately across from one another.

*Knowing the mnemonic device "MAD Horse/Buck" will remind you of the most common opposite species. Maple, Ash, Dogwood, Horsechestnut or Buckeye

Simple v Compound

Pay attention to where the bud is located on your tree. This will tell you if you're looking at a tree with simple or compound leaves.

Simple
The petiole joins to the twig. Most RMC trees have simple leaves.

Compound Line
Leaflets join along a central stalk, which attaches to the twig.

Leaf Margin

Leaf Margin is the term for the characteristics of a leaf at the edges. Once you've determined the overall shape of a leaf, look at the margin for additional clues.

Compound Hand
Leaflets all join at the same point on a central stalk.

Smooth (Entire) Wavy

Toothed (Dentate or Serrate) Doubly Toothed

Common Types of Tree Fruits and Seeds

Learning basic categories of fruits and seeds can help you make better and faster identifications, but remember that for the most part they're only on the tree for part of the year.

Seed Pod
Honeylocust, Eastern Redbud

Acorn
Oaks

Cone
Feather, Broom, and Scale categories

Samara
Maples, Ashes, Elms

Drupe
Dogwoods, Prunus species