

The Native Tree Collection

The Columbus Park of Roses
Recreation and Parks Department
Columbus, OH
2025

The Arboretum at the Columbus Park of Roses provides a beautiful frame for the roses and other gardens in the park. Among the collection of trees are 34 species of native trees. Some trees in the park are native to the western US and are not included in this tour. This self-guided tour allows you to walk through the entire garden. It will be useful to consult the map found in the free brochure located in dispensers on garden kiosks.

The tour begins in front of the west side of the shelter house. If you look toward the parking lot, you will see the first tree adjacent to the steps to the left.



Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*)

- Deciduous tree, native in Eastern US and common in Ohio
- Grows to 80-100' tall with a 50-100' crown and is considered the most massive tree as defined by its circumference in the eastern half of the US.
- Distinctive peeling bark which leaves patches of white and grey
- Prefers moist alkaline soil and full sun
- Prone to infections of anthracnose, a fungus that destroys new spring growth
- High wildlife value, attracting many types of birds. A few years ago, a wood duck nested in this tree! The hollow trunks of old giant trees were homes for chimney swifts in earlier times.
- Flowers are insignificant
- Native Americans hollowed out trunk sections for dugout canoes

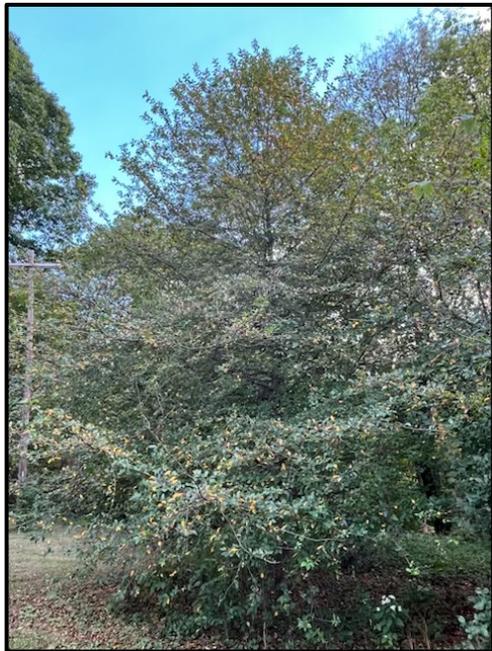
Across from the volunteer office at the south end of the shelter house, you will find the next tree.



American Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)

- Deciduous tree, native to the lower 2/3 of Eastern US. It is found naturally in the southern counties of Ohio.
- Name comes from the taste of its hardened sap that bleeds from wounds on the tree. In pioneer days this gum was used medicinally as well as for chewing gum
- Grows quickly, reaching 80' tall with a straight trunk and a 40-75' crown
- Prefers moist slightly alkaline soil in full/ part sun.
- Star shaped leaves turn purple and red in the fall
- Does not flower for about 15 years; once flowering produces large numbers of spiny gumball fruits.
- Important timber tree and used in furniture, cabinets, barrels and more
- Is a host tree for over 30 species of moths and butterflies, including the luna moth

Look to the edge of the ravine to see the next tree.



Black Gum/Tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*)

- Native to Eastern US and found in all of Ohio except in the NW part of the state
- Grows slowly to 30-60' tall with a 25' crown
- Prefers moist, well drained acidic soils in full/part sun but adapts to other conditions
- Leaves are noted for their dark green waxy and glossy appearance; in the autumn they change to many shades of yellow, orange, scarlet and purple (often on the same branch) or they all turn crimson
- Has inconspicuous flowers; female tree needs a male tree to produce fruit
- Berries are small and blue and eaten by many birds and mammals

There are two of the next tree species within the adjacent grassy area SE of the patio area.



River Birch (*Betula nigra*)

- Deciduous tree, native to eastern US and common in Ohio
- There are two in this spot
- Grows rapidly reaching 30-70' tall with a 40-60' crown
- Southernmost of the native birches
- Can be trained as a single or multi-trunked tree
- Noted for its flaky, silvery bark to reveal a cinnamon-brown trunk
- Prefers moist, acidic soil in full/part sun
- Has both male and female structures with the catkins (male flowers) hanging on bare twigs in winter
- One of the most disease-free birches and extremely resistant to Birch Borer

Continue walking to the edge of the west bed of the Perennial Garden to find the next two trees.



Yellow Buckeye (*Aeschulus flava*)

- Deciduous tree, native in eastern US, primarily in the Appalachian region and Ohio River Valley
- Tallest and healthiest of the native buckeye trees
- To distinguish the yellow buckeye from the Ohio buckeye, scratch a leaf scar and smell; the yellow buckeye is non-stinky while the Ohio buckeye has a skunky aroma.
- Leaves with five leaflets 4-7" long
- Grows 50-75' tall with a 30-50' crown
- Prefers moist well-drained acidic soil in full/part sun
- Yellow flowers found in clusters up to 6" tall bloom in April-May are followed by the poisonous buckeye fruit. The husk is smooth on the outside, unlike the spiny Ohio buckeye husk.
- Fall color of leaves is yellow orange



Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*)

- Deciduous tree, native to eastern North America and all of Ohio
- Perhaps the most spectacular of the native flowering trees, with white and pink blooms in April to May
- Branches are nearly horizontal
- Grows to 15-30' tall with a 20' crown
- Prefers moist drained acid soils in full/part sun
- Leaves turn red in the fall
- Has hard and shock-resistant wood used for making weaving shuttles, spools, small pulleys, etc.
- Native Americans used the bark and roots as a remedy for malaria; red dye was made from the roots
- Attracts birds and butterflies. The red fruits bitter and inedible to humans, but loved by birds.
- Larval host for Spring Azure butterfly

Follow the path heading east from the flagpole bed. Immediately, you will see the next tree adjacent to the benches.



Black Maple (*Acer saccharum* ssp. *Nigrum*)

- Deciduous tree, native in midwestern US
- Once considered a separate species, now is considered a subspecies of sugar maple
- Grows to 60-75' tall with a 40-50' crown
- Prefers a moist, well-drained soil with full/part sun
- Inconspicuous yellowish-green flowers in April
- Compared to the Sugar Maple, the Black Maple generally has a darker bark and leaves which have a drooping, limp appearance which are soft and downy on their undersides; Sugar Maple leaves are much flatter, hairless and a brighter yellowish green
- Leaves turn yellow orange in fall

Continue east until you reach a walkway on your right leading to a small gazebo. When you reach the gazebo, you will find the next tree on your right at the edge of the flower bed.



American Holly (*Ilex opaca*)

- Broadleaf evergreen, native to eastern and central US
- Only native US holly (Christmas holly) with spiny green leaves and bright red berries
- Slowly grows 15-30' tall with a 10-20' crown
- Inconspicuous blooms are seen in May
- Prefers acidic, well-drained soils in full/part sun
- Both male and female tree are needed near one another to produce fruit
- Birds love the fruit which is poisonous to humans
- Wood is fine textured and used for inlays
- Larval host for Henry's Elfin butterfly

You will find a Pin Oak on the west side of the gazebo.



Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*)

- Deciduous oak of the red oak group, native to northeast US and southeast Canada; common in Ohio
- Name comes from a practice of "pinning together" the timbers of a barn with the tough branchlets of this tree
- One of the fastest growing oaks
- Grows to 50-70' tall with a 40-60' crown
- Prefers moist, acidic soils in full sun
- Upper branches are ascending, middle somewhat horizontal and lower are descending
- When in shade, lower branches eventually die and break off leaving pin-like stubs
- Yellowish-green flowers
- Acorns take two years to mature; are 1/2" long with shallow, saucer-shaped acorn cups
- Leaves turn deep red in fall
- Attracts birds, mammals, butterflies, moths
- Larval host for Gray Hairstreak butterfly

The next tree in this area is at the south edge of the flower bed to the east of the gazebo.



White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*)

- Deciduous tree, native to eastern North America and a common tree in Ohio
- Mature height 60-80' with a canopy of 50'
- Compound leaves with 7 leaflets
- Many ash trees have been killed by the Emerald Ash borer, native to Asia, first discovered in Michigan in 2002; will kill tree within 3-5 years after infestation.
- This tree has been treated
- One of the first trees to change color in autumn
- No longer recommended to plant
- Larval host for many butterflies such as Swallowtails, Hickory Hairstreak, Mourning Cloak and Red-spotted Purple Viceroy

Going east along the ravine edge, a short distance from the gazebo, is the American Beech.



American Beech (*Fagus grandiflora*)

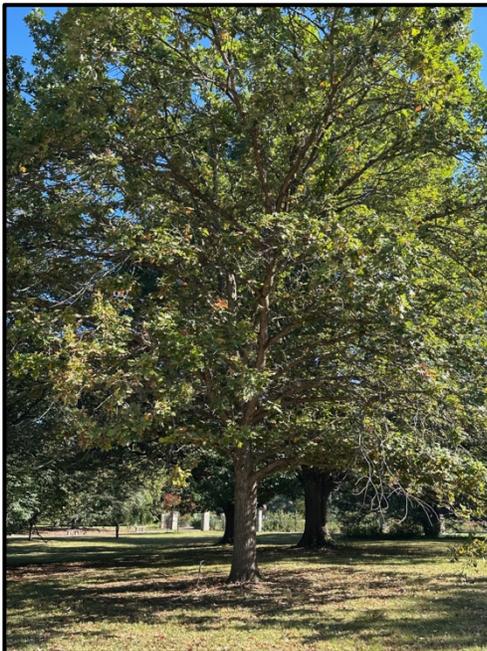
- Deciduous tree, native to eastern North America and common in Ohio
- Grows to 50-80' tall with a 40-80' crown
- Prefers full/part sun in well-drained moist acid soil
- Trunk has distinctive thin, smooth and steel grey bark; often vandalized by people wanting to carve their initials
- Has both male and female structures; flowers bloom in April-May
- Fall color ranges from yellow green to a rich golden-brown
- Often holds leaves until spring
- Beechnuts ripen in the fall, are triangular and edible and liked by squirrels, raccoons, bears and other mammals plus some game birds
- Larval host for Early Hairstreak butterfly

Head back toward the shelter house and walk to the north end of the paved area. To your right in the grassy area, you will find the next three trees.



Kentucky Coffeetree (*Gymnocladus dioica*)

- Deciduous tree native the midwest US and present commonly in Ohio, primarily in the western half of the state
- Slow growing reaching a height of 80' tall with a 50' crown
- Prefers alkaline moist well-drained soils with full/part sun but grows almost anywhere
- Has male and female trees
- Greenish-white small flowers in late spring and fruit with a purplish-brown pod up to 10" in length that ripens in October
- Has the largest leaves of any tree in eastern North America; each being up to three feet long and composed of many leaflets 1-3" long
- Roasted seeds were once used as a coffee substitute; raw seeds are poisonous
- Larval host for honey locust moth



Swamp White Oak (*Quercus bicolor*)

- Deciduous tree, native to midwestern US and common in Ohio
- Grows to 50-70' tall with a 50-60' crown
- Has attractive peeling bark, especially on young trees
- Leaves are dark green on top and silvery-white underneath (hence the name bicolor) with 5-10 rounded lobes
- Fall color is orange-gold to yellow
- One of the largest specimens grows in Washington County, Ohio
- Prefers moist, acidic soils in full/partial sun; frequently found in wet woods, swamps and near bodies of water
- Acorns have a cup covering over half of the 1-1 ¼" nut
- Has both male and female structures
- Bark is light gray in color which is characteristic of White Oaks



Shumard Oak (*Quercus shumardii*)

- Deciduous tree, native to southeast US yet common in Ohio.
- Rapid growth to 60' tall with a 40' crown in Ohio, but larger in southern states
- Member of the red oak group
- Prefers moist, well-drained soils of variable pH in full/partial sun
- Leaves turn russet to orange red in fall
- Acorns almost as wide as long, $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1" long with rounded apex and a flat base
- Has both male and female structures
- Produces a hard wood used in many ways

Looking back to the north side of the shelter house, you find six of the next species, the Sweetbay Magnolia.



Sweetbay Magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*)

- Deciduous tree, native to eastern US
- Grows to 10-20' tall with an equal size canopy or as an open, multi-stemmed shrub; can grow to 50' in its southern range
- Prefers medium to wet acid soil in full/part sun
- Has fragrant, creamy white waxy flowers (2-3" in diameter) that bloom in mid-spring
- Flowers are followed by dark cone-like fruits with bright red seeds in fall eaten by birds
- Leaves are dark green with silvery undersides

Head north on the access roadway to find the shingle oak just beyond the porta potty.



Shingle Oak (*Quercus imbricaria*)

- Deciduous tree, native to eastern and central US. Found throughout Ohio.
- In the red oak group
- Leaves unlobed which is not typical for an oak tree
- Grows slowly, reaching a mature height 50-60 feet
- Common in Ohio River Valley
- The ¾" long rounded acorns, which take two years to mature, are an important food for wildlife
- Wood once used by early settlers for shingles, has a distinct red-orange coloration, seen in red oaks

Walk a little farther north to the access road, turn right and right again. Go through the Backyard Garden to the middle of the east side of the garden. Directly in front of you is the next tree, a massive Northern Red Oak.



Northern Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*)

- Deciduous tree, common and native to eastern and central North America
- Typically live 200-300+ years. This tree is very old and was a seedling in 1776!
- Grows to 50-75' tall with a 70' crown
- Leaves with toothed lobes are sharply pointed at tips
- Brick-red autumn color
- Acorns have flat, saucer-shaped cups
- May take 40 years for an abundant crop of acorns to develop; oaks can produce 3 million acorns in its lifetime
- Susceptible to oak wilt, a fungal disease without a cure
- Important hardwood for the timber industry
- Supports hundreds of species of insects and animals; 534 species of butterflies and moths use it for reproduction

Walk to the entrance to the Formal Rose Garden and walk along the pillars on the north side of the garden. At the last pillar, to your left you will find three Pagoda Dogwoods.



Pagoda Dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*)

- Native small tree or shrub found in eastern North America and mainly in the eastern two thirds of Ohio
- Understory tree growing to 15-35' with a crown of 20-30'
- Prefers moist acidic soil in part sun to full shade
- Distinctive horizontal branching
- Wide, flat-topped clusters of fragrant, white flowers becoming clusters of blue-black berries
- Unlike other native dogwoods, the leaves are alternate rather than opposite
- A specialist bee visits the flowers for pollen
- Berries are very nutritious and a favorite of almost 100 bird species
- Larval host for Spring Azure butterfly

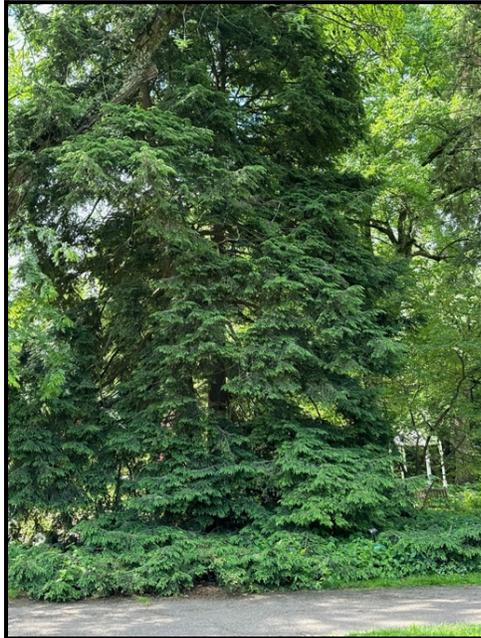
Also in this area, a little to the NE is the next tree, the Bald Cypress.



Bald Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*)

- Deciduous conifer native to southeast US but commonly found in Ohio
- Grows to 50-70' tall with a 20-45' crown
- Prefers medium to wet acidic sandy soils in full sun but tolerates a wide range of soil conditions
- Trunks are buttressed at the base and when grown in water, often develop knobby root growths that protrude above the water around the tree
- Foliage is soft, feathery and yellow green and turns orange/cinnamon-brown in fall
- Has a round woody cone about 1" in diameter
- Larval host for Baldcypress Sphinx moth

Leave the north side of the garden, walking south on the west side of the Wedding Mall. At the end of the pathway is the Canadian Hemlock.



Canadian (Eastern) Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*)

- Native to eastern US and naturally common in the eastern half of Ohio
- Grows to 40'-70' tall with a 25'-35' crown
- Prefers moist acidic soils in full/part sun; one of the more shade-tolerant evergreens
- Popular landscape tree, but as a native tree only found in eastern half of Ohio, primarily in Appalachia
- Several can also be seen at the south edge of the park
- Has flattened dark green needles
- Has separate male (catkin) and female (cone) flowers in mid-spring. Small cones hang from the tips of new growth. Cones remain on branches for several years after releasing seeds.
- Larval host for Columbia silk moth

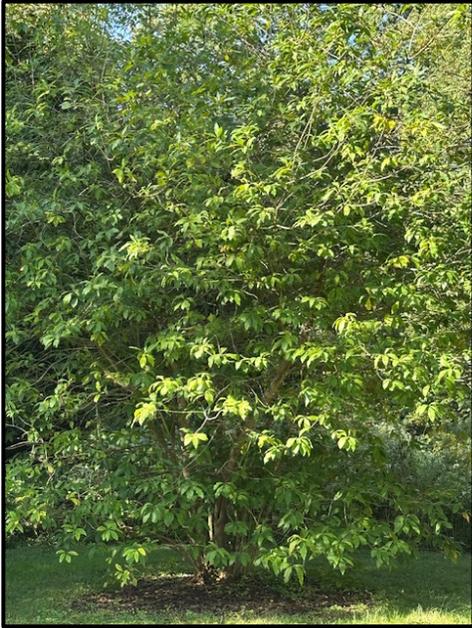
To the right of the Hemlock, you will find an Eastern Redbud.



Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)

- Deciduous tree native to Eastern North America and abundant in the southern two thirds of Ohio
- Magenta-colored flowers in April before leaves appear
- Grows rapidly to 25' tall with a 25' crown
- Usually is multi-trunked
- Prefers moist, well-drained soils adapting to acidic or alkaline conditions in partial shade
- Member of Bean family
- Drought-resistant once established
- Does well in low-nutrient soils; can grow in acidic, alkaline, loamy, moist, rich, sandy and clay soils

Walking east past the Herb Garden, follow the pathway leading to the band gazebo, to find the American Fringetree on the right and south of the bench.



American Fringetree (*Chionanthus virginicus*)

- Deciduous tree of Eastern US
- Grows as a multi-stemmed shrub or a small tree
- Grows slowly to 12-20' tall with a crown of 12-20'
- Prefers full/part sun in a well-drained but moist acid soil
- Has fragrant white flowers May to June in airy drooping clusters 4-6" long with fringe-like petals
- Olive-like fruits ripen to a dark, bluish black in late summer and are a food for birds and wildlife
- Host tree for the Rustic Sphinx moth

The Swamp Chestnut Oak is on the left side of the pathway to the bandstand gazebo.



Swamp Chestnut Oak (*Quercus michauxii*)

- Deciduous tree in southeast US; in Ohio, it is confined to the eastern half of the state
- Member of the white oak group
- Grows to 40-60' tall with a crown of 30-50'
- Prefers moist, well-drained acidic soils in full/part sun
- Has both male and female structures that flower in spring
- Leaves are unlobed chestnut-like, shiny green above and grayish beneath
- Leaves turn dark red in fall
- Acorns are shiny and take a single season to develop
- Acorns can be eaten raw, without boiling
- Is also called "Basket Oak" because baskets were woven from fibers obtained from splitting the wood.
- Has been a popular timber tree due to its durable wood
- Host plant for the White M Hairstreak, Northern Hairstreak and Horace's Duskywing butterflies

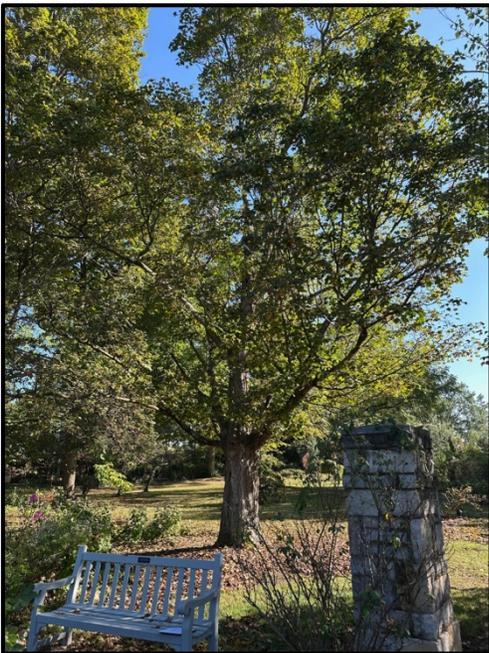
Walk to the band gazebo and go up the steps, looking out the back. There you will find a large pawpaw along with several surrounding ones



Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*)

- Deciduous tree native to most of the eastern US and throughout Ohio
- Prefers soils of variable pH that are moist and well-drained; often found along streams
- Understory tree that needs shade to become established
- Grows to 25' tall with a crown of 15'
- Often forms thickets of trees which are all connected
- Large leaves 6-12" long which turn yellow in fall
- Very difficult to transplant due to a sparse root system
- Flower is dark lavender to purple red
- Fruit is oblong, up to 6' in length ripens in late summer and are eaten by racoons, squirrels and opossums
- Fruit edible but can cause skin irritation and GI upset
- Larval host for Zebra Swallowtail and Pawpaw Sphinx

Retrace your steps to the pathway along the Long Mall. Continue east until reaching the pillars at the entrance to the Heritage Rose Garden. To your left are three Sugar Maples.



Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*)

- Deciduous tree native to eastern North America and found throughout Ohio but prefers cooler areas with the more acidic soils of northeast Ohio
- Grows to 40-80' tall with a 30-60' crown
- Bark of young trees is smooth, becoming shaggy with age
- Prefers soil of medium moisture in full/part sun
- Has spectacular color when its leaves turn bright red, yellow and orange in fall
- Native Americans taught early colonists how to tap the trees to make maple syrup
- Is among the leading furniture woods

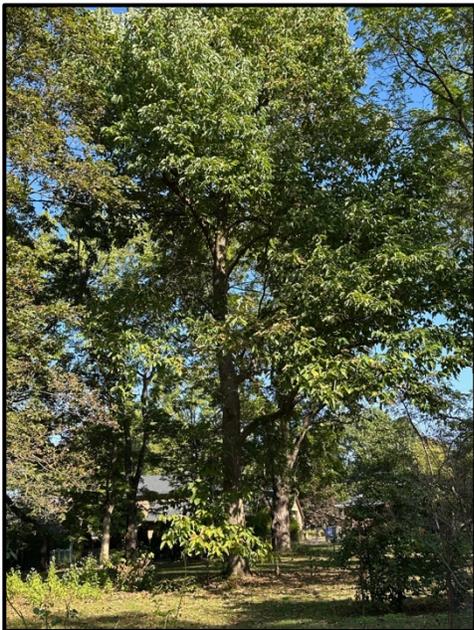
To the right of the pillars are two Red Maples.



Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)

- Deciduous tree native to eastern North America and throughout all of Ohio
- Grows to 70' tall with a 40' crown
- Named for its red winter twigs and buds, red spring flowers, red summer petioles (structure that connects leaf to twig) and red fall foliage
- Predominately a species with male and female flowers on the same tree
- Early small red flowers that emerge before the leaves, an early sign of spring
- Is wind-pollinated
- Prefers moist to wet, acidic soils and full/part sun
- Leaves have 3-5 lobes separated by V-shaped angles and are silvery and hairy over entire lower surface
- Seeds and flower buds eaten by any species of birds
- Larval host for Cecropia moth

Take a few steps on the pathway and look to your left and you will see a Cucumber Maple.



Cucumber Tree (*Magnolia acuminata*)

- Deciduous tree native to eastern US (especially the Appalachian Mountain region) and the most common of the three native Magnolias in Ohio
- Grows to 70' tall with a 30' crown
- Hardest of all magnolias
- Prefers moist, well-drained acidic soil in full/part sun
- Slightly fragrant greenish-yellow tulip-like flowers 2-4" long in late spring in the upper canopy of the tree
- Fruits fall to ground with seeds enclosed and become forage for ground-feeding birds as well as small mammals
- Named for the green, warty, cucumber-like fruits



Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*)

- Deciduous tree native to Eastern US and common throughout Ohio
- Grows to 75' tall with a 30-50' crown
- Prefers moist, well-drained alkaline soil in full sun
- Male and female flowers occur on the same tree
- Leaves are up to 2' long with 5-11 pairs of leaflets along a central axis and a single leaf at the tip
- Leaves are pungent when rubbed or bruised
- Nuts are edible (if harvested before wildlife get to them) and very hard to crack
- Ripe nuts have a yellow-black hull which produces a brown-black dye that will stain hands
- Is a scarce and coveted native hardwood used in furniture
- Produces juglone, a chemical that is toxic to nearby competitor plants
- Larval host for Luna and Regal Moths

Walk around the south side of the Heritage Rose Garden. As the pathways merge continue to walk a short distance looking to both sides of the arbor where you will see two Red Buckeyes.



Red Buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*)

- Deciduous clump forming shrub or small tree native to southeast US in their native range.
- Grows to 12-15' tall with a crown of 12-15'
- Prefers well-drained acidic soils in full sun
- Blooms in April and May, having 4-10" red to orange-red tubular flowers
- Fruit is a light brown oval seed capsule about 1-3" in diameter containing 1-3 shiny dark brown seeds (buckeyes) which are toxic
- Hummingbirds are attracted to the flowers

Closer to the ravine you will find the next three trees.



Eastern White Pine (*Pinus strobus*)

- Evergreen conifer native to eastern North America including all of Ohio.
- Rapidly grows to 50-80' tall with a 20-40' crown
- Prefers medium moisture in acidic soil in full sun
- Has bluish green needles to 5" long in bundles of five
- Cones are cylindrical and 4-8" long not produced until the tree is 5-10 years of age
- Important timber tree, more so in the past; today used in telephone poles and as pulp to produce paper.
- Commonly sold as a Christmas tree
- The age of the tree can roughly be determined by counting the number of whorls of lateral branches from bottom to top
- Needles turn yellow after 1½ years and fall in autumn
- State tree of Maine

Look to the ravine edge to see a mature Hackberry



Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*)

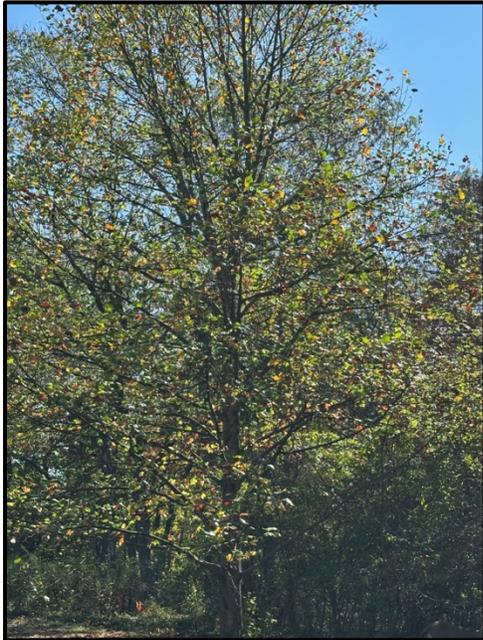
- Deciduous tree native to central and NE North America and most of Ohio
- Grows to 60-100' tall with a crown of 60'
- Prefers alkaline moist, well-drained soil in full/part sun
- Leaves have serrations on the margins and insignificant fall color
- Flowers that bloom in early spring aren't generally noticed; they develop into small, rounded fruits in summer that become dark by late autumn
- Fruits are edible and a favorite of birds
- Develops Witches' broom (contorted twig clusters at the ends of branches) somewhat commonly.
- Larval host to the Question Mark, Mourning Cloak and American Snout butterflies

To the east slightly and at the ravine's edge are persimmon trees.



Common Persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*)

- Deciduous tree, native to eastern and midwestern US. Central Ohio is the northernmost limit of its native range
- There are three persimmons in this area
- Grows to 50' tall with a 30' canopy
- Member of the Ebony family
- Prefers moist, well-drained soil in full to partial sun but adaptable to a variety of soils and growing conditions
- Has male and female flowers on separate trees
- Fruits ripen in autumn and are pink orange in color; become sweet-tasting and date-like taste after several frosts and mild freezes
- Native Americans made persimmon bread and dried the fruit
- Foxes, opossums, raccoons, skunks, deer and birds feed on fruit
- Wood used to make golf-club heads



Tuliptree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)

- Deciduous tree native to most of eastern North America and throughout all of Ohio
- Tallest tree of eastern forests
- Fast growing, reaching 60-90' tall with a 30-50' crown
- Prefers moist, well-drained acid soil in full/part sun
- In the magnolia family
- Large showy flowers that resemble tulips bloom at the top of the tree so are easily missed
- Largest solitary flower of any native Ohio tree
- Leaves may turn yellow and gold in autumn
- Wood is used for furniture, boatbuilding and paper pulp in addition to general lumber
- Native Americans made dugout canoes from the trunks
- State tree of Kentucky, Tennessee and Indiana
- Larval host for Eastern Swallowtail butterfly

There are three burr oak trees on either side of the pathway just west of the parking lot.



Burr Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)

- Deciduous tree native to eastern US and southeast Canada and found throughout most of Ohio
- Said to be the most picturesque of oaks in the Midwest
- Grows slowly to a height of 90' with a 60-80' crown
- Adaptable to a variety of soils; prefers mildly alkaline soils
- Typically live 200-400 years
- Large dark green leathery leaves with 5-9 lobes of varying size that turn yellow brown in autumn
- Acorns are large and oval, 1½" long with cups that cover more than half the length of the acorn and covered with a mossy scale or bur near rim
- Acorns an important source of food for wildlife
- Larval host for Edwards' Hairstreak and Horace's Duskywing butterflies

East of the Rosalea parking lot is the final tree, the Ohio Buckeye.



Ohio Buckeye (*Aesculus glabra*)

- Deciduous tree native to eastern US and Canada and found throughout most of Ohio
- Grows to 20-40' (less frequently to 75) tall with a 20-40' canopy
- Often seen as an understory tree
- Prefers acidic moist well-drained soil and shady conditions to avoid leaf damage, but full/part sun is best for floral and nut production
- Flowers are yellowish-green clusters in mid-spring
- Each leaf has 5 leaflets 3-6" long
- The fruit, buckeyes are shiny dark mahogany color with a tan eye and are poisonous
- All parts of the tree emit an unpleasant odor when bruised
- Pioneers carried a buckeye in their pocket toward off rheumatism
- State tree of Ohio