

# Ohio Caverns Tree Tour

Take a self-guided journey around the Ohio Caverns park to admire the various trees that adorn this beautiful property. Follow the map and identify all 20 trees. Each tree will have a yellow tag with the trees corresponding number on it to aid in identification. Enjoy!



1. **Eastern Red Cedar** *Juniperus virginiana* - This tree has very characteristic bark that appears to be completely shredded. It also has a mixture of scales and needles as the tree ages. Its wood is commonly used to make pencils and chests.
2. **Scarlet Oak** *Quercus coccinea* - Oak trees are classified in two different groups: red oaks and white oaks. Scarlet oak is part of the red oak group, which means its wood has a red color when freshly cut. This tree can be tough to identify, but one of the best ways is to look at its acorns. The bottom of the acorn will have little rings that circle the tip.
3. **White Oak** *Quercus alba* - This oak is part of the white oak group, which means that its wood is white when freshly cut. Another feature of this tree is the shaggy bark. The shaggy bark is a popular “hang-out” spot among the bats.
4. **Black Cherry** *Prunus serotina* - As the name suggests, this tree produces little red berries that are quite popular among birds. The wood of this tree is used frequently to make high-quality furniture, cabinets, and veneer. The best way to recognize this tree is by looking at the bark. Does the bark look like burnt corn flakes?
5. **Sassafras** *Sassafras albidum* - Sassafras trees are very easy to identify by the leaf shape. Look at the leaves. Do you see ovals, mittens, and dinosaur feet? If you tear a leaf up and smell it, it has a characteristic citrus odor.
6. **Ginkgo** *Ginkgo biloba* - The Ginkgo is the oldest living tree species with the ability to live up to 1,000 years. The Ginkgo tree is dioecious (has male and female trees), and the female trees produce a foul smelling fruit. Ginkgo is a very popular herbal medicine used to treat a variety of ailments from poor circulation to Alzheimer’s disease.
7. **Osage-orange** *Maclura pomifera* - Like Ginkgo trees, these trees are also dioecious. The female trees produce softball-sized green fruits that smell like citrus. Both male and female trees have small thorns, so they used to be planted very close together to serve as a fence for cattle.

8. **Sycamore** *Platanus occidentals* - The Sycamore tree can typically be found displaying its characteristic white, grey, and green bark along streams and waterways. The outer bark is dark, but it typically sheds its outer bark revealing the inner white bark. Of all the trees on this tour, the Sycamores leaves will be the largest..
9. **Pawpaw** *Asimina triloba* - Pawpaw trees typically grow in colonies. It sends out roots that eventually sprout another tree. In order for the pawpaw tree to produce fruit, it must cross-pollinate with another pawpaw tree nearby that is not a clone. Pawpaw fruit are yellow-brown and ripen in late summer. It is Ohio's native state fruit.
10. **Kentucky Coffeetree** *Gymnocladus dioica* - The coffeetree is another dioecious tree, so only the females produce the green fruit pods. The pioneers used to use the beans inside the pods as substitutes for coffee. This tree has the largest leaves in Eastern North America. A single leaf may be up to three feet long with many leaflets.
11. **Red Maple** *Acer rubrum* - This tree is a favorite among many because it displays a brilliant red in the fall. It also has red buds, red branches when young, and even red petioles (the "stem" of the leaf). Maples produce samaras or helicopters to disperse its seeds. Can you find any samaras?
12. **Flowering Dogwood** *Cornus florida* - This tree has several characteristic features that make it easy to identify. Look at the bark. Does it look like alligator scales? Now look at the buds. Do they look like purple-grey Hershey kisses? Finally, tear a leaf and check out the white stringy fibers coming out. Now you are an expert!
13. **Norway Spruce** *Picea abies* - This tree is native to Europe, but it is a very common tree in Ohio. It is often planted as an ornamental tree and sometimes serves as a screen to snow or wind. Maybe you have one in your landscape at home.
14. **Silver Maple** *Acer saccharinum* - This tree was named after the silvery underside of its leaves. It is usually found in very wet places but is commonly planted in urban environments despite the fact that it has very brittle wood. This tree can easily be confused with a red maple, but if you scratch a twig from this tree it will emit a strong odor.
15. **Ohio Buckeye** *Aesculus glabra* - This tree is the state tree of Ohio, but it is commonly confused with the horsechestnut tree and the yellow buckeye tree. There are several differences, but the easiest is to look at the buds. The Ohio Buckeye has buds with layers of scales that tend to flare out a bit on the edges. The yellow buckeye has similar buds but the scales do not flare out. The horsechestnut has buds that are extremely shiny and sticky. Buckeye seeds or nuts were named based on their resemblance to the eye of a male deer.
16. **American Elm** *Ulmus Americana* - This particular elm tree is a survivor of the Dutch elm disease (DED) that has decimated the elm population in the United States. DED is caused by a fungus (*Ophiostoma ulmi*) that lives on North American and European elm bark beetles. This tree used to stand with several other elms, but the other elms fell victim to the disease. In an attempt to fight the disease, the Ohio Caverns staff used to treat these elm trees with epsom salts and water.
17. **London Planetree** *Platanus acerifolia* - This tree is a relative of the sycamore. The London planetree sheds its bark similarly to the sycamore, but its inner bark tends to be more green than white. Also, the sycamore produces single fruits whereas this tree produces fruit in pairs. Can you find any of these fuzzy fruits?
18. **White Pine** *Pinus strobus* - White pines have very characteristic needles, which come in bundles of five. Another distinguishing feature of the white pine is the branch structure. The branches come off the trunk in whirls which can be counted as an estimation of the age of the tree. Can you estimate the age of this tree?
19. **Tulip Poplar** *Liriodendron tulipifera* - These trees are one of the tallest trees in the eastern United States, known to reach the height of 190 feet. It's a medium to fast growing tree that prefers deep, rich soil. It has an unusually shaped leaf which is uniquely cut off at its apex. Leaves are alternate and simple, pinnately veined measuring five to six inches long and wide. This tree produces honey which is favorably regarded by bakers.
20. **American Basswood** *Tilia Americana* - Most currently use this tree for its nice shade qualities, but Native Americans used to cut the inner bark into thin slices to make rope, bandages, and mats. This tree is also quite popular among bees because the nectar produces high quality honey. Another interesting characteristic is the fruit structure. Look and see if you can find a strange leaf-like bract with a nut dangling from it.