

TREE # 4 RED OAK

Quercus rubra

The **red oak** is a truly impressive and important tree in the forests of southwest Michigan. The acorns, which take two years to mature, are an important source of food for wildlife. The trees themselves are large with strong wood that is ideal for flooring and veneer. The best way to identify red oak is to look for the smooth striping running down the length of the tree in the bark. It is the only oak species to exhibit this characteristic. It is also a common tree in our forest, so keep your eyes open for more along the hike.



TREE # 6 MUSCLEWOOD

Carpinus caroliniana

The **musclewood** is the smallest of the big trees you will see on your hike. However, this particular tree is actually close to state champion size for this species. Its name is derived from the bark's appearance of flexed muscle and the strength of the wood. Other names for this tree are **blue beech** and **American hornbeam**. Musclewood trees enjoy moist and fertile soil and do very well in the shade.



TREE # 5 COTTONWOOD

Populus deltoides

The **cottonwood** tree is a species of tree that can grow in many different places at Sarett. You will see them in the dry upland forest and the wet low lying areas. In the late spring the air is filled with cotton-like hairs carrying the seeds. The cottonwood is a fast growing and short-lived tree. Growth of over ten feet per year has been documented in several locations. Since it is so fast growing, the wood is very light and weak, making it suitable for applications such as plywood or pulpwood.



TREE # 7 SILVER MAPLE

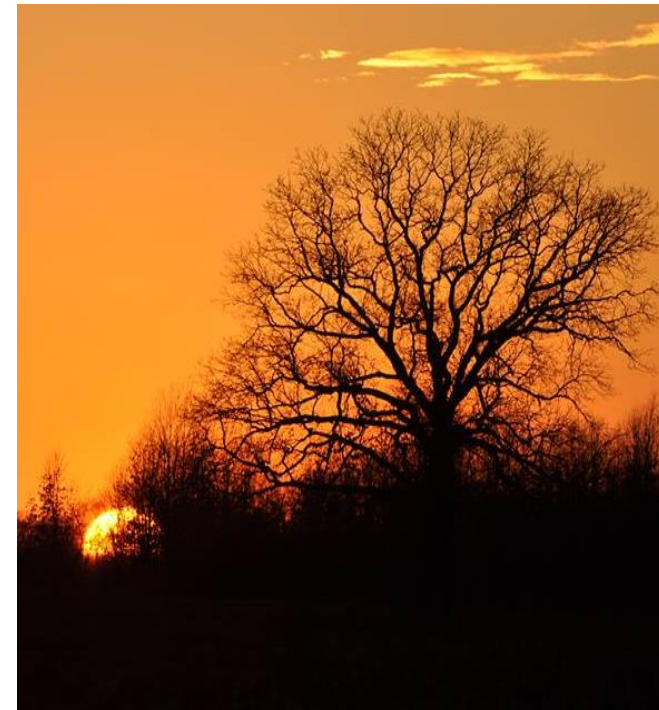
Acer saccharinum

You will see **silver maples** all around Sarett because these trees thrive in wet and dry soil conditions. The silver in the name comes from the underside of the leaf which has a striking silver look in windy conditions. The silver maple has seeds called double samaras that resemble helicopters as they float down from the canopy. The seeds are carried by the wind away from the parent tree to a new location to grow and develop. The smooth bark of young trees changes to gray and rougher bark as the tree matures.



SARETT NATURE CENTER'S

BIG TREE HIKE



Sarett Nature Center
2300 Benton Center Road
Benton Harbor, Michigan
269.927.4832
www.sarett.com

TREE # 1 WHITE OAK

Quercus alba

The majestic **white oak** tree is found throughout eastern hardwood forests. The acorns are a favorite food of wildlife and the wood is used for making the aging barrels for bourbon whiskey. The white oak is identified by its light gray bark and rounded lobed leaves. It prefers dry areas in which to grow and can live 450 years or more.



Look for the tallest snag at Sarett along Deer Creek Path. A snag is a standing dead tree that provides food sources and shelter to many different animals. Note the large cavity near the top where animals can live!

TREE #2 TULIPTREE

Liriodendron tulipifera

The tallest eastern hardwood in North America is the **tuliptree**. The large tree that you are looking at is different from other tuliptrees. You will notice this massive specimen has a wide spreading crown with branches further down the trunk than other tuliptrees. It suggests that it grew up in an area with little competition for sunlight, unlike most tuliptrees growing in the forest. The trunks of tuliptrees are often lined with holes made from yellow-bellied sapsuckers looking for sap and the bugs that it attracts.



TREE #3 PIGNUT HICKORY

Carya glabra

The hickories produce some of the most prized hardwood in North America. The wood is exceptionally dense, which is excellent for the manufacturing of furniture and tools. The wood is also used for smoking meats to give them the famous hickory-smoked flavor. The **pignut hickory** received its name from the bitterness of its nuts. The hickories with the most relished nuts are the **shagbark** and **shellbark** hickories.

