

Hello Master Gardener!

*The information found here should help you feel comfortable leading a short tree tour and to know what to look for when identifying trees. Please be advised that the beginners' class is a prerequisite for the advance tree identification workshop.*

Generally we do tree tours when there are leaves on the trees so it is important that you become familiar with leaf characteristics as well as other features used in tree identification and make note of as many identifying factors as possible. Sometimes you will see trees that you know --for instance--an oak tree (hint hint—acorns) and then you can proceed with the leaf identification to discover what type of oak (Post Oak). *Acer* (maple) is another familiar tree (look for those winged keys/samaras) if the maple you are observing looks like the maple leaf on the Canadian flag you know it is a sugar maple.

Here are a few things to look for in regard to tree leaf identification:

Is it simple or compound?	What general shape is the leaf?	If it is compound how many leaflets are there?
How long and wide is the leaf?	How do the veins run (venation)?	Are leaves arranged alternately? Opposite?
Is it hairy and where?	What does the base look like?	What does the tip look like?
How long is the leaf stalk?	Are the margins smooth, serrated?	What color is the topside & underneath?
Is there an unusual texture?	Does it have a certain smell or taste?	Does it have gland dots on the leaf?
Does it shed its leaves?	If it is a simple leaf does it have lobes?	Are the sinuses deep or shallow?

*For each tree you visit remember to look at the tree's leaves, bark, fruits, flowers, and overall shape...even its habitat can be helpful.*

Let us know how we can help you!

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PS---make sure to know your audience when teaching the public...John Q. Public does not particularly care that the *Cercis canadensis* L has a cordate shaped leaf...the Eastern redbud has a heart shaped leaf (and easier to remember!); so when learning the proper terminology also have a familiar word (petiole or a more well-known term like stalk/stem).