

# Photo guide to the trees of Forever Forest, Harwinton

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*Provided by:*



*The Harwinton Land Trust*

- Forever Forest is a 14 acre natural area owned by the Harwinton Land Trust.
- The area is located ¼ mile from RT 118 on Whetstone Road.
- At least 26 species of trees are found within Forever Forest.
- Sign posts have been placed next to demonstration trees that best typify each species.
- All demonstration trees are located along marked trails.
- This binder contains photos and descriptions of the species of trees found in Forever Forest.

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Many of the photos shown in this guide were obtained on [leafsnap.com](http://leafsnap.com). This is an excellent site for anyone interested in tree identification. It is being developed by researchers from Columbia University, the University of Maryland, and the Smithsonian Institution. Another very good source for tree identification was created by the Ohio Division of Forestry; it's best to computer-search "**Ohio Tree Index**".



## Red Maple



Red maples are a medium-size tree, growing 60-80 feet tall. The trees have reddish twigs, flowers, and seeds. In the early spring, the trees produce a profusion of scarlet flowers along its bare branches giving them a reddish tinge. **ID Tips:** Notches in leaves and seed pods are V-shaped. Seeds and seed stems are reddish. Leaf edges are toothed.

## Sugar Maple



The sugar maple is a medium-large sized tree growing 70-100 feet tall. The leaves of sugar maples have five lobes and turn spectacular shades of bright yellow to fluorescent orange-red in the fall. This species is a major source of sap for maple syrup. **ID Tips:** Notches in leaves and seed pods are U-shaped. Seeds and seed stems are greenish brown. The leaf edges are smooth.

## Striped Maple



Striped maples are small trees, growing no more than 35 feet tall. This maple is an important source of food for deer, moose, porcupines, and rabbits. **ID Tips:** The bark is greenish brown with vertical silver stripes.

## White Oak



White oaks are one of the most long-lived hardwood trees (some specimens live for over 600 years). Mature trees can grow up to 90 feet tall with wide crowns (tops). The high-grade wood of this oak is used to make tight barrels to hold whiskey and other liquids. Deer prefer to eat their acorns, which are sweeter than other oaks in CT. **ID Tips:** The bark of white oaks is ashen gray and deeply fissured. Their greenish acorns protrude well outside of the caps. Leaves have rounded tips.

## Northern Red Oak



Northern red oaks are rapidly growing trees that can reach 115 feet in height. They are one of the most important oaks used for timber in North America. **ID Tips:** The bark has long vertical furrows. Acorns protrude well outside their narrow cap. The leaf sinus (indentation) at the middle of the leaf is less than half way to the vein. The leaf is dull green above.

## Black Oak



Mature black oaks grow to 80 feet in height. They are commonly found on dry, upland soils. Their inner bark is rich in tannins and was once used for tanning leather. **ID Tips:** Compared to northern oaks, their bark is darker with blockier furrows. Acorns are brownish, small (3/4 inch long), and usually do not protrude far outside of the cap. The acorn's cap often has a scaly edge. The leaf is shiny green above.

## Scarlet Oak



Scarlet oaks can grow up to 100 feet tall. They grow mostly on dry, sandy soils. Their glossy green, seven-lobed leaves turn vivid shades of scarlet red in the fall. **ID Tips:** Acorns are deeply enclosed within the cap and tend to have concentric rings around the protruding part of the acorn. Leaf sinuses are widely C-shaped and reach more than half way to leaf mid-vein. New leaves in the early spring are red.

## Sassafras



Sassafras are medium-sized trees. They produce shoots that were once used to flavor root beer. **ID Tips:** Their leaves may be mitten-shaped with two lobes (shown above), may have three lobes, or just be single—sometimes all on the very same tree! Smell the leaves for a hint of wintergreen.

## Paper Birch



The paper birch is a medium-sized tree reaching 60 feet tall. It prefers cool temperatures, nutrient rich soil, and plenty of sunlight. **ID Tips:** The bark is white and papery with black branch scars. It peels in horizontal strips revealing an orange or pink inside. The leaf is oval shaped. Catkins (above right) occur in groups of usually two or three in the early spring. *Only one paper birch was present in Forever Forest and it died due to over-shading in the maturing forest. The informational sign post for this demonstration tree was removed.*

## Gray Birch



Gray birch are small (20-30 feet tall) short lived trees. They have little value for lumber. **ID Tips:** Sometimes it's difficult to distinguish between paper birch in the woods. Gray birch bark is chalky grayish-white. Their leaf is triangular-shaped. Leaf stems are flat, causing the leaves to flutter in the breeze. Catkins usually occur singly in the early spring.

## Black Birch



Black birch (also called sweet birch) is a medium-sized tree that grows 50-80 feet tall. Its twigs and bark have a strong wintergreen smell. **ID Tips:** Unlike most birches, its bark is dark brown. Young trees have bark that is smooth, glossy-reddish brown, papery, and may peel (above middle). Old trees have bark that becomes darker and scaly, cracking into irregular plates (above right).

## Yellow Birch



Yellow birch are medium-large sized trees growing 70-100 feet tall. It grows best in wet areas. The twigs, when scraped, have a slight scent of wintergreen, though not as strong as the related black birch. **ID Tips:** In younger trees (above middle) the bark is golden and peels horizontally into thin, filmy strips. Older trees (above right) have duller bark that curls into loose plates with few horizontal lines.

## Shagbark Hickory



Shagbark hickory can grow up to 100 feet tall and live for over 200 years. The nuts are edible and tasty; they are relished by squirrels and other native animals. **ID Tips:** Mature trees have very shaggy gray bark that attach to the trunk at the middle and bend outward at the ends. Their nut is roundish and splits open in four parts.

## Pignut Hickory



Pignut hickories can grow to 80 feet tall and live up to 300 years. The nut provides food for numerous species of native animals. **ID Tips:** Populations of pignut hickories can differ in leaflet shape and number leaflets per leaf stem, but unlike the shagbark hickory, the bark is tight and its nut is pear shaped, splitting open in two parts.

## American Chestnut



American chestnuts were one of the most important hardwood trees in CT until the 1930s, when the introduction of a fungus caused the chestnut blight. Mature trees no longer exist in our forests, but sprouts continue to grow from old roots. Trees generally grow no taller than 20 feet (above right) before succumbing to the blight (above center). **ID Tips:** This species can be identified by large, widely-spaced teeth along the margins of the leaves and signs of blight on the trunk. Affected trees usually have new sprouts growing up around the blighted trunk.

## American Hornbeam (Ironwood)



Ironwood is a small tree, growing no taller than 30 feet tall. It typically grows in lowland forests or along streams. **ID Tips:** The bark is smooth and gray to blue-gray. It has a twisted, sinewy appearance. Small nutlets grow within distinctive clusters of long, leaflike bracts (above right).

## Serviceberry (Shad Bush)



Shad bush is a small tree that grows no higher than 50 feet. The tree produces small purplish fruits, which are sweet, juicy, and edible, but are often quickly eaten by birds. **ID Tips:** The bark is grayish with thin vertical ridges. In the early spring before leaves come out, the tree has very attractive white, five-petal flowers.

## Witch-hazel



Witch-hazel is a small tree or shrub, often with multiple trunks. It grows in forest under-stories, and along waterways and swamps. **ID Tips:** The yellow, spidery flowers bloom in autumn after the leaves drop. Flowers have a mildly spice smell and last well into late autumn. The bark is thin, smooth to slightly scaly and warty.

## White Ash



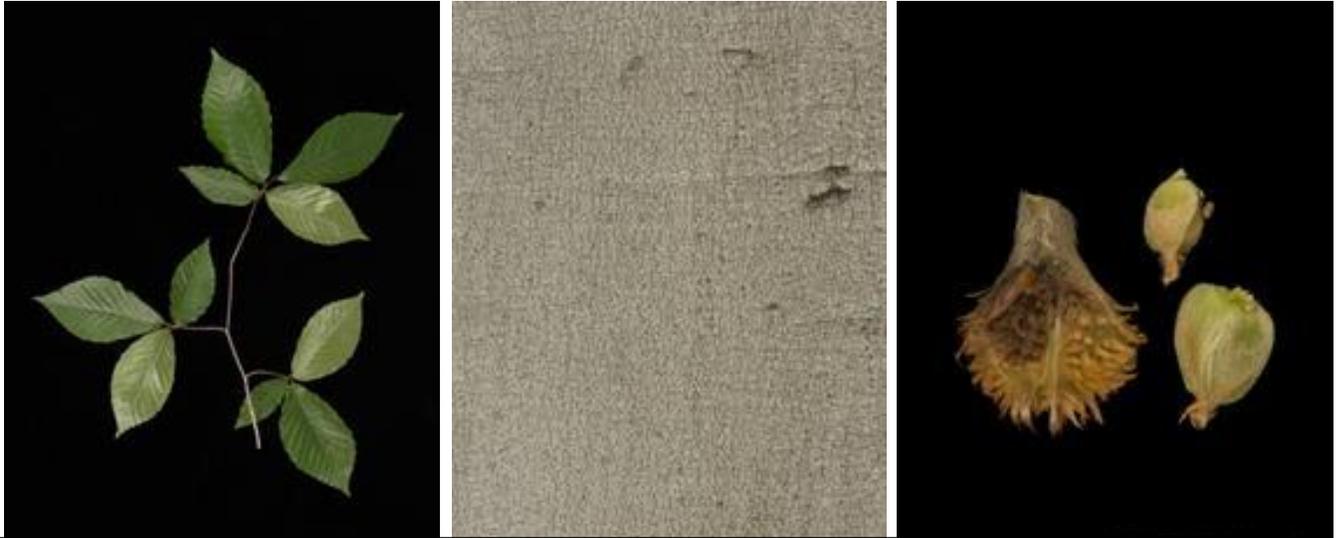
The white ash is a large tree growing to 70-100 feet high. Its trunk grows straight and its branches start far up on the trunk. The leaves generally have seven leaflets along the leaf stem. **ID Tips:** The fruit (called samaras) is single-winged with one seed. The samaras are fairly sharp at the tip. The bark is ash grey and divided by narrow ridges that form a net-like pattern.

## Black Cherry



Black cherry trees can grow to 100 feet tall. Their crowns are narrow when growing in forests. The tree produces a small ½ inch red-purple fruit that turns black when ripe. Fruits are used to flavor sodas. **ID Tips:** In older trees, the bark on the trunk is blocky (above), but on branches and young trees the bark is smooth and shiny. In late spring, white flowers are in 4-6 inch-long cylindrical, often drooping clusters.

## American Beech



The American Beech is a medium-sized tree growing 50-80 feet tall. Small stems may encircle a mature tree, forming a thicket, or eventually a stand of beech. Beech trees can produce large amounts of nuts that are an important source of food for many native animals. Good nut production occurs every 2 to 8 years. Early frost retards nut production. **ID Tips:** The bark is notably smooth and gray. During the fall, look for bristly nut husks fallen on the ground (the actual nuts are devoured quickly).

## Slippery Elm



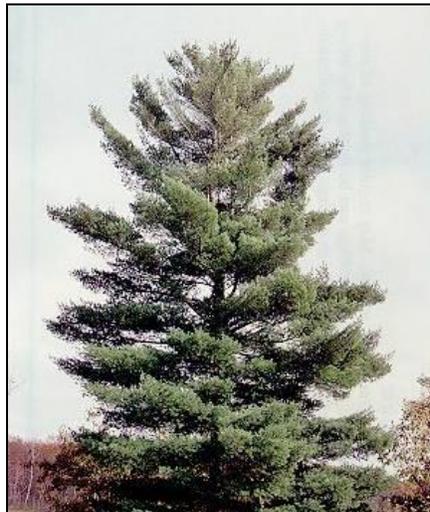
Slippery elms are medium-sized trees growing 50-80 feet tall. This tree is not as seriously affected by Dutch elm disease as the American elm. The tree is named after the inner bark that exudes a slick gel. **ID Tips:** Leaves are sand papery to the touch. Clusters of reddish flowers come out on branches in early spring before the leaves.

## Black Gum (Black Tupelo)



The black tupelo is a medium-sized tree growing 50-80 feet in height. Many of its leaves change color early in the fall, and it has been suggested that this might alert migrating birds to the presence of ripe fruits on the tree. **ID Tips:** Bark is light brown to reddish brown. The autumn color of the leathery leaves is bright scarlet, gold, and orange-purple. Very slender branchlets are set at right angles to branches.

## Eastern White Pine



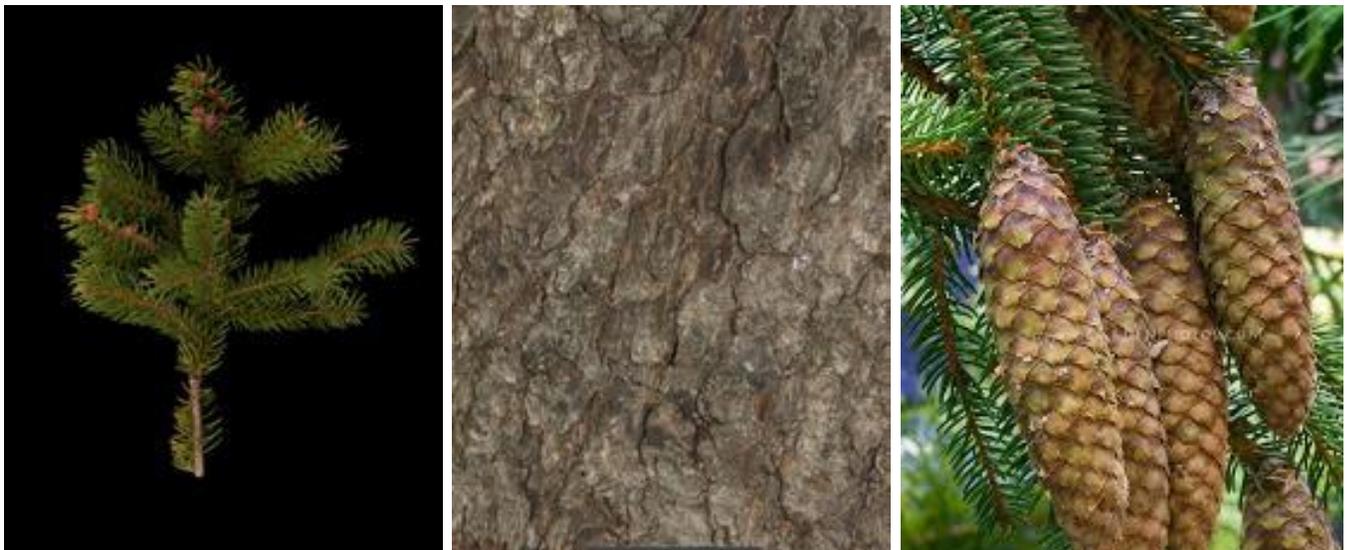
The Eastern white pine is a large evergreen tree growing up to 150 feet tall. It is the tallest tree in CT and has been called the monarch of the eastern forest. **ID Tips:** Its soft, flexible needles are in bundles of five. Older trees tend to have broad crowns of distinctive tiers of a few widely spaced branches. The cone is long and narrow; often whitened at its tips by resin.

## Eastern Hemlock



The Eastern Hemlock is a medium-sized evergreen tree that grows to 60-70 feet tall. They typically grow in shady moist slopes, rocky areas, or stream valleys. Many of the hemlocks in CT succumbed to the woolly adelgid, an Asian insect that infests trees. Hemlocks that survived the adelgid now seem to be recovering. Hemlocks provide valuable winter shelter for wildlife. **ID Tips:** The tree has very short flattened needles that are aligned in two flat, opposite rows (an adaption to shady habitats). Numerous small cones grow at the tips of branches.

## Norway Spruce



The Norway spruce is a large evergreen tree (reaching 80-100 feet tall) that is native to Europe, but has become naturalized in the Northeast. **ID Tips:** Needles are  $\frac{1}{2}$  -1 inch long, stiff, slender and sharp pointed. Cones are 4-7 inches long, cylindrical and slightly curved. Branches hang downward loosely.

## European larch



The European larch is a deciduous conifer that is native to central Europe, but has become naturalized over a wide range in North America. It can grow over 100 ft. tall. The tree prefers full sun. Its wood is tough and flexible, but currently has limited value as lumber. **ID Tips:** Small, light green needles turn bright yellow before they are shed in the autumn. Trees look dead during the winter due to the natural shedding of needles.