

# FIVE RIVERS METROPARKS

## Native Trees of Germantown

### It's our nature.

This park is one of 25 outstanding public facilities operated by your Five Rivers MetroParks system. Founded in 1963 to serve the Greater Dayton area, MetroParks protects nearly 15,000 acres of open space and provides year-round recreation, education and conservation opportunities. Facilities are available to the public free of charge – made possible by Montgomery County citizen support of a property tax levy.

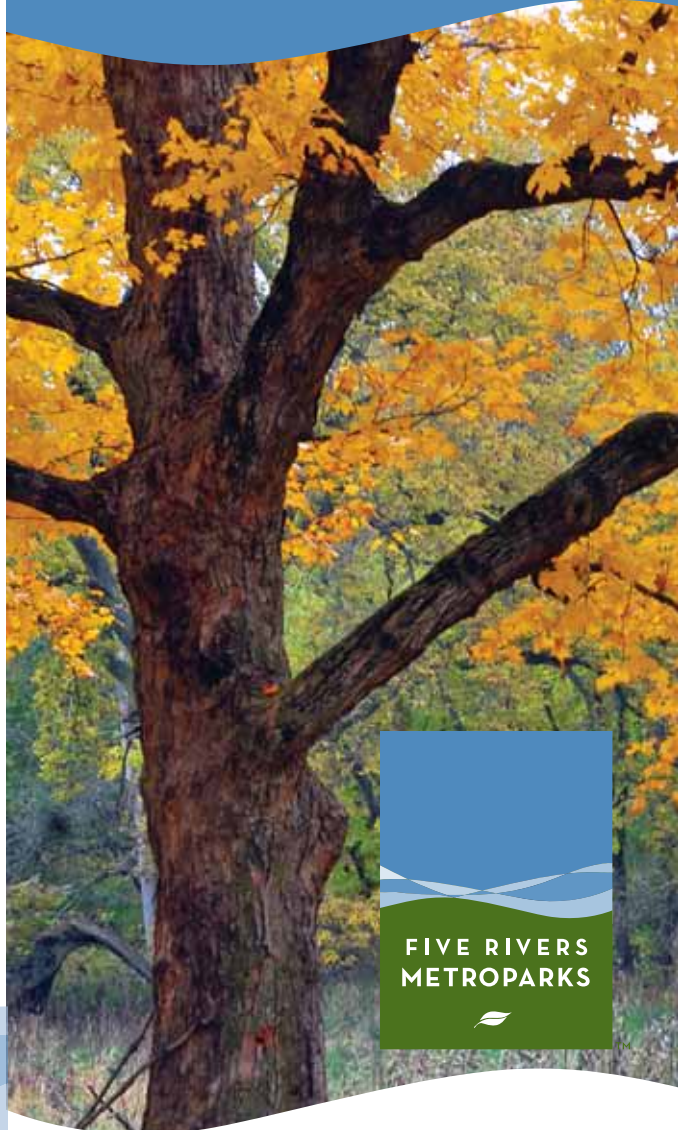
### For More Information

Administrative Offices ..... (937) 275-PARK  
 Web Site ..... [www.metroparks.org](http://www.metroparks.org)

### Ranger Assistance

For emergencies, dial 9-1-1 and a ranger will be dispatched to your location immediately.

For non-emergencies, call the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office at (937) 535-2580. They will dispatch a ranger to your location.



# Welcome to Germantown MetroPark

Some representative native trees of Germantown MetroPark and southwestern Ohio are listed here alphabetically by their common names. The scientific names are shown in *italics* after the common names. These trees are labeled on the "White Trail," a half-mile loop trail starting from the Nature Center. You're encouraged to cover the trail slowly and note the various shapes and sizes of the trees. Watch and listen; discover the diversity of wildlife that make the forest their home.

Ohio was once more than 95 percent covered in mature forests. With European settlement, the state's forests were cleared until only 10 percent of the forest cover remained. Thus, Ohio's woodlands, including Germantown MetroPark, are "second growth" forest. Now, about 25 percent of the state is woodlands.

Germantown MetroPark has the largest tract of old, second-growth woods in Montgomery County. Due to its size, it provides crucial habitat for species not found in other areas.



### Why are forests beneficial?

- They support a diverse community of plants and animals.
- They are a source of food (nuts, berries, fruits).
- They provide shade and wind breaks.
- They're a source of wood and more than 5,000 other products and by-products.
- They provide recreation (hiking, bird watching).
- Forest plants take in carbon dioxide, release oxygen and make food through a process called **photosynthesis**. Trees are our largest green plants.
- Trees collect, clean and recycle the water we drink and use. Through transpiration, an acre of maple trees can give off 8,000 gallons of water in a single growing season.
- Forests help control erosion.

Germantown MetroPark is a place where you can enjoy the beauty of the trees and the world they support.

**Enjoy your visit!**



## American Hornbeam

*Carpinus caroliniana*

Many recognize this tree by its smooth gray bark, which forms ridges that resemble taut muscles, hence its other common name – musclewood. Additional common names include blue beech and ironwood. Its dense wood made it useful historically for cart wheels and axles.

## Basswood

*Tilia americana*

This tree tends to grow in clumps. It may have several trunks as a result of root sprouts. In winter, basswood buds are red and smooth. Its fruit hangs from a “wing” to help it catch the wind and disperse from the tree.

## Beech

*Fagus grandifolia*

This tree is best recognized by its smooth gray bark, often carved with initials. Beech buds resemble small, orange cigars. Can you find the beech nut fruit, a favorite food of squirrels, blue jays, titmice, nuthatches and woodpeckers?



## Black Cherry

*Prunus serotina*

Notice the tree’s dark, flaky bark. Some describe it as looking like burnt corn flakes. Its small fruits are beneficial to wildlife and the tree’s wood is valued for furniture.

## Black Locust

*Robinia pseudo-acacia*

Look for small paired thorns located at the buds on the twigs. Fragrant clusters of white blossoms appear in the spring. It is a pioneer species (early successional), meaning it is one of the first trees to appear in an open area. Did you notice the crisscross pattern of the bark?

## Cottonwood

*Populus deltoides*

This tree grows large along rivers and in low, wet areas. Its bark is deeply grooved. Cottonwood’s soft wood and closeness to water made it useful for dugout canoes. Its cottony seeds float in the wind in late spring.

## Flowering Dogwood

*Cornus florida*

In the spring, it produces large white “flowers” (the white petals are actually bracts and the true flower is found in the center of these modified bracts). The wood is very durable and was used to make golf club heads. Historically, Native Americans chewed the twigs to whiten their teeth.



## Hackberry

*Celtis occidentalis*

Hackberry can be recognized by its “warty bark.” This is a tree that thrives in wet areas. Many birds are attracted to hackberries due to the abundance of insects found living in these trees.

## Honey Locust

*Gleditsia triacanthos*

This tree is heavily protected with branching thorns. It produces long, curly seed pods that rattle when dried. The leaf is also quite large and feathery, with many small leaflets making up this compound leaf.

## Ohio Buckeye

*Aesculus glabra*

Our state tree is one of the first trees to grow leaves in the spring, but also loses them early in the fall. It has large, pointed buds covered with many scales. Can you find a buckeye nut? It is shiny, reddish-brown and covered by a prickly husk.



## Redbud

*Cercis canadensis*

This is a small, understory tree that produces delicate pink flowers in early spring. It is in the legume family (bean family), and has nodules on its roots that contain nitrogen-fixing bacteria, which help it tolerate poor soils. In the fall, flat bean-like seedpods are present. Can you see one?

## Red Cedar

*Juniperus virginiana*

This tree is an evergreen pioneer that can survive in poor soils. Its wood is the source of fragrant cedar chests and chips. Red-cedar produces bluish berries that are eaten by birds and used to flavor gin.

## Red Oak

*Quercus rubra*

Notice the bark; do you see “ski trails” running down the tree? This oak belongs to a group of oaks that all have leaves with pointed lobes. Historically, oaks were used for ships because of their waterproof properties. More recently, they had been used by Chinese scientists to make heat shields for space re-entry vehicles.

## Shagbark Hickory

*Carya ovata*

This tree is easily identified by its “shaggy bark” that peels off in large strips. Its large leaves usually have five leaflets, and the winter buds are fuzzy. The shagbark hickory produces a nut covered in a thick hull. These trees have very hard wood that is useful for tool handles and produces a lot of heat when burned.

## Sugar Maple

*Acer saccharum*

This tree is the dominant species in our local forest and yields valuable lumber. It is usually associated with maple syrup, which is made when its sap is boiled down. It takes nearly 40 gallons of sap to make one gallon of syrup. This process takes place in late February to early March. Maples produce winged seeds that spin like helicopters as they fall.

## Sycamore

*Platanus occidentalis*

This tree is noted for its “ghostly” white bark. It is generally found growing along creeks and rivers. Sycamores are the largest deciduous tree in Ohio. The leaves are large and the fruits are small, singular balls on a stem. Can you find one?

## Tulip Tree

*Liriodendron tulipifera*

This tree grows fast, straight and tall (up to 200 ft). The wood resembles that of some unrelated poplars, which has led to misleading common names such as “tulip poplar” and “yellow poplar.” Its soft wood is used for lumber. It’s a relative of the magnolia and produces a beautiful green-and-orange flower resembling a tulip.

## White Ash

*Fraxinus americana*

Ash has a compound leaf made up of many small leaflets. It produces a pointed, winged seed called a samara. Its wood is used for baseball bats and hockey sticks. Early American colonists used it for shovel handles, hayforks and plows because it was easily bent. Look for white blotches on the trunk, which is a fungus (white patch fungus) often associates with white ash.

## White Oak

*Quercus alba*

This large tree is characterized by its bark, which peels horizontally to the tree. The leaf of this oak has rounded lobes, unlike the pointed lobes of the red oak. Its acorns (fruits) are a good food source for squirrels and chipmunks.

