

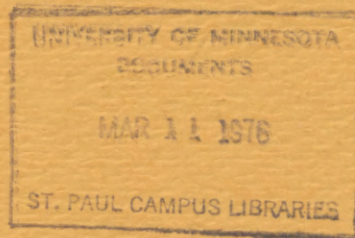
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a summer guide to some common

# TREES, SHRUBS, & WILDFLOWERS

of northern minnesota



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## *About this guide .....*

In northern Minnesota we are surrounded by a fascinating array of plant life, yet the majority of us are able to identify only a fraction of the native flora and know little of the interesting differences and details of individual plants. It would behoove each of us to become better acquainted with the flora and fauna of northern Minnesota since it is quite unique when compared to the rest of the world.

Our society is very dependent on our plant life for the food and fiber which sustains our very life. The forests of northern Minnesota provide us with many of the necessities of everyday living in the form of paper, lumber, chemicals, and other wood products. We have reached the stage of sophistication in our food production so that we no longer rely on the forests for our food supply; nevertheless, there is a wide array of foodstuffs available in our forests that can add variety to our menus.

Man's own welfare depends upon the nature of the plant communities and ecosystems about him. We often become so intensely engrossed in day-to-day survival and routines that we forget to take notice of the usefulness, beauty, and purpose of plant communities and the individual specimens within them. Sensitivity and awareness to our national environment can return us to an inherent feeling of oneness with the earth and increase the quality of our lives.

The purposes of this field guide are: (1) to help you learn to identify some of the more common native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers of our area; (2) to help you learn in what way individual plants contribute to our everyday life; and, (3) to point out some edible fruits, nuts, and roots that can be found in our forests. Take time to look closely at the world about you. Smell a basswood blossom, feel the cool wet moss beneath your feet, and sit back and watch the fluttering of an aspen leaf in the breeze. Acquainting yourself with nature by observing with your senses will give you more enduring memories and enjoyment.

This guide is designed for the layman or amateur botanist. To the more serious or advanced botanist, we would recommend some of the publications listed in the bibliography. The writers have attempted to eliminate most of the unfamiliar words that are used in textbooks, plant keys, and other scientific publications to describe plant parts, shapes, and other characteristics. The guide is also specifically designed for summer use as it depicts leaf shapes, flower and fruit descriptions, and uses pictures as key identification features.

Plant keys have not been provided for identifying the different species. Again, we would recommend more advanced texts for those who wish to learn how to use keys for identification purposes.

The illustrations of conifer needles and cones were taken from the USDA-Forest Service publication Important Trees of Eastern Forests and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' Trees of Minnesota. All other illustrations are original drawings by the authors.

There are several ways this guide can be used. It can be used for identification purposes on nature walks or field trips; it can supplement other textbooks for the classroom botany teacher; and individual sheets can be removed from the booklet and used as nature trail signs by enclosing them in clear contact paper and posting on signs. Refresh your memory about native flora of northern Minnesota by using it as a handy home or office reference.

The arrangement of this guide is as follows: the first section covers deciduous trees and is followed by coniferous trees, then shrubs; the final section covers wildflowers. The list of native trees covers all species native to northern Minnesota. It does not include several introduced species that have been widely planted or some of the deciduous trees that are in the extreme northern parts of their natural range. The list of native shrubs is not complete; only the most common ones are mentioned; likewise, with the list of wildflowers, only the most common, showy, or unusual are listed.

The scientific names for all the species listed in this booklet have been cross referenced from several sources. Tree and shrub names follow most closely those listed in E. L. Little's Check List of Native and Naturalized Trees of the United States, Agriculture Handbook No. 41, 1953. Wildflower names follow most closely those listed in Henry A. Gleason and Arthur Cronquist's Manual of Vascular Plants of Northeastern United States and Canada. These references are widely accepted as being authoritative.

The authors have enjoyed refreshing their knowledge of native flora in preparing this guide. We hope that you will find it useful as you widen your acquaintance with native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers of northern Minnesota.

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and

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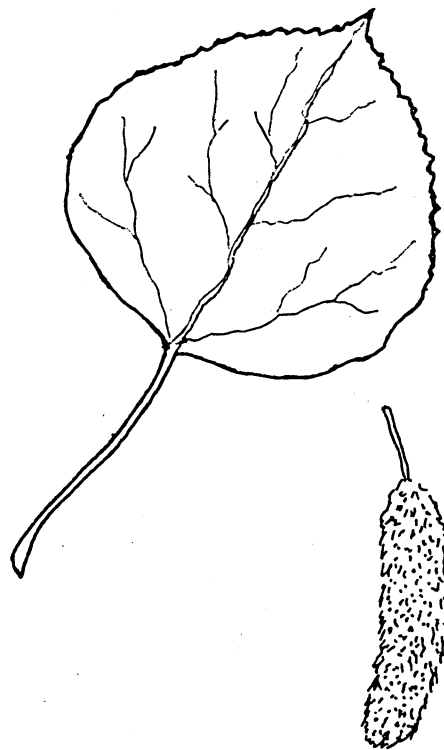
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# QUAKING or TREMBLING ASPEN

(POPULUS TREMULOIDES)

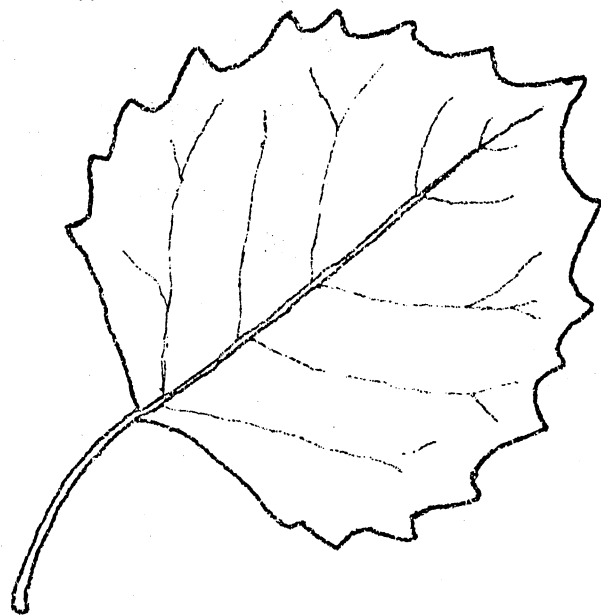
- \* GENERAL INFORMATION: OFTEN CALLED POPPLE OR POPLAR. A VERY COMMON TREE THAT BECAME ESTABLISHED AFTER LOGGING AND FIRES. FOUND ON ALL SITES, BUT THRIVES BEST IN DAMP, HEAVY SOIL. ON GOOD SITES, WILL REACH HEIGHTS OF 60-70 FEET.
- \* RANGE: FOUND THROUGHOUT MINNESOTA, BUT MOST COMMON IN THE NORTH AND THE NORTHEAST.
- \* WOOD: LIGHT, SOFT, RATHER WEAK. USES: PULP, WOOD MATCHES, CRATING, STUDS.
- \* BARK: THIN, LIGHT GREEN IN COLOR; SMOOTH, EXCEPT FOR BLACK SPOTS OR ROUGH PROTRUSIONS.
- \* FRUIT: CONSISTS OF COTTONY MASS CONTAINING TINY ROUND LIGHT BROWN SEEDS; RIPENS IN THE SPRING.
- \* LEAF: SMALL, BROADLY OVAL, SHORT-POINTED AT TIP AND FINELY TOOTHED ALONG THE MARGIN, PROMINENT MID-RIB VEIN. LEAF STALKS ARE FLATTENED AT RIGHT ANGLES TO LEAVES, CAUSING LEAVES TO QUAKE OR TREMBLE IN THE SLIGHTEST BREEZE.



# BIG-TOOTHED ASPEN

(POPULUS GRANDIDENTATA)

- \* GENERAL INFORMATION: OFTEN CALLED POPLAR OR POPPLE. SIMILAR APPEARANCE AND OFTEN GROWING IN ASSOCIATION WITH QUAKING ASPEN. NOT AS ABUNDANT AS QUAKING ASPEN. THRIVES BEST ON RICH, DAMP SOILS. WILL REACH HEIGHTS OF 60 FEET OR MORE.
- \* RANGE: FOUND THROUGHOUT MINNESOTA, EXCEPT IN SOUTHWEST.
- \* WOOD: LIGHT, SOFT, RATHER WEAK. USED IN MANUFACTURE OF PAPER, BOXES, AND CRATING.
- \* BARK: SMOOTH, GRAY OR YELLOWISH-GREEN; FURROWED AND DARK BROWN AT BASE OF OLD TREES.
- \* FRUIT: CONSISTS OF COTTONY MASS CONTAINING TINY, ROUND, LIGHT BROWN SEEDS; RIPENS IN LATE SPRING.
- \* LEAF: COARSE-TOOTHED; LENGTH 2 TO 4 INCHES. USUALLY APPEAR A WEEK OR TWO LATER IN THE SPRING THAN QUAKING ASPEN.



# BALM OF GILEAD

(POPULUS BALSAMIFERA)

- \* GENERAL INFORMATION: SIMILAR IN APPEARANCE TO QUAKING AND BIG-TOOTHED ASPEN. SOMETIMES REFERRED TO AS BALSAM POPLAR. GROWS BEST IN RICH MOIST SOILS. WILL REACH HEIGHTS OF 50 FEET OR MORE.
- \* RANGE: COMMON THROUGHOUT THE NORTHERN HALF OF MINNESOTA.
- \* WOOD: SOFT, CLOSE GRAINED, NOT VERY STRONG, NOT VERY DESIRABLE COMMERCIALY. IS SOMETIMES USED FOR CRATING, BOXES, AND MIXED IN WITH OTHER ASPEN FOR THE MANUFACTURE OF PAPER AND HARD-BOARD.
- \* BARK: SMOOTH, BROWN-GRAY COLOR; DEEPLY FURROWED ON OLD TRUNKS.
- \* FRUIT: SMALL, COTTON-LIKE. SIMILAR TO OTHER ASPENS.
- \* LEAF: OVATE, SHARPLY POINTED, FINELY-TOOTHED MARGIN. SHINY GREEN ABOVE AND OFTEN RUSTY TINGED BENEATH. BUDS ARE COVERED WITH A STICKY RESIN THAT HAS A STRONG, PUNGENT ODOR.

