

Introduction to Tree Identification

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What is a tree?

- Woody plant
- Usually one main stem
- Exceeds 15 feet in height and 3 inches in diameter at maturity

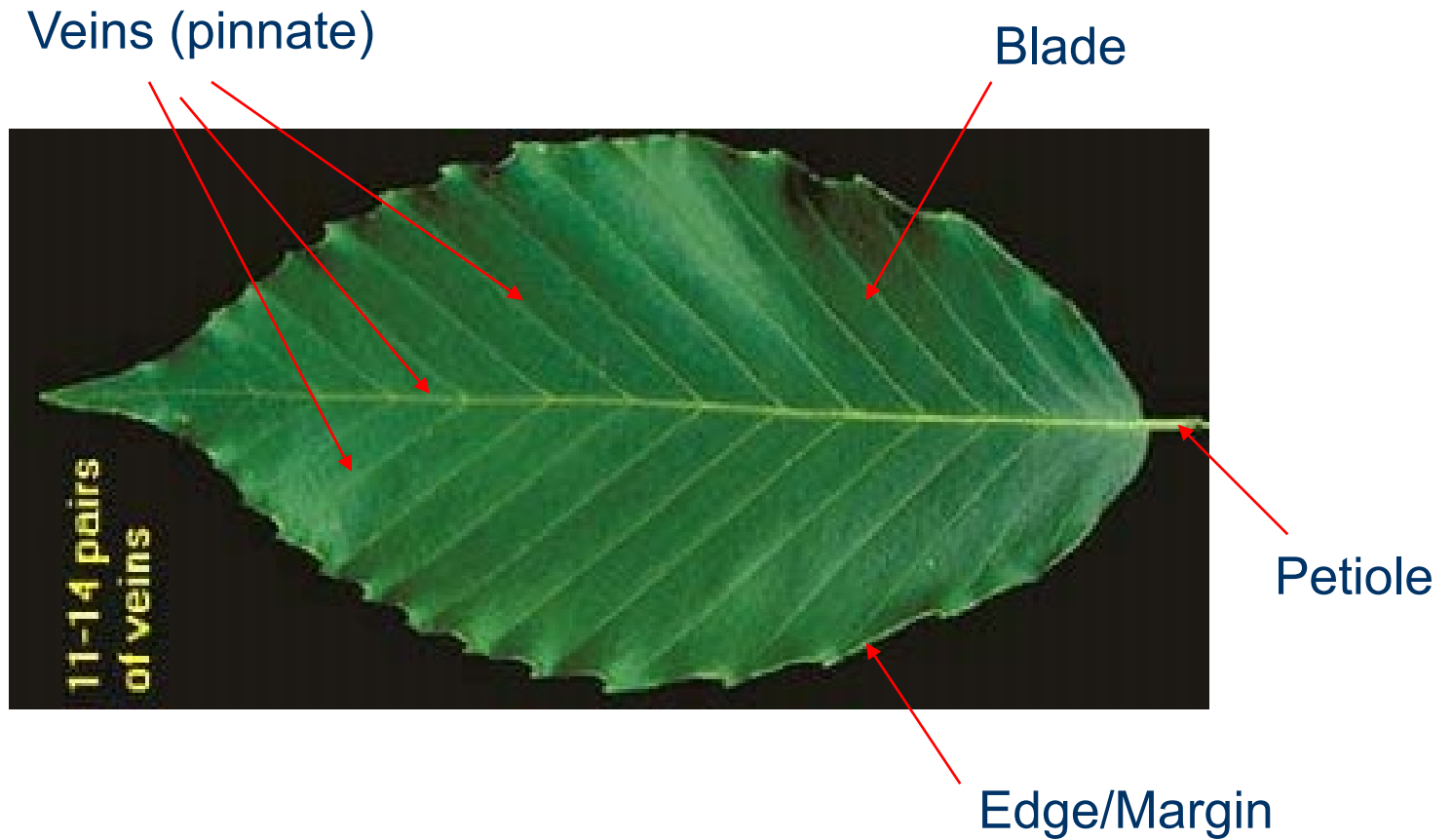
Tree Identification Features

- Leaves
- Bark
- Twigs
- Reproductive Parts
- Overall Form
- Growing Site

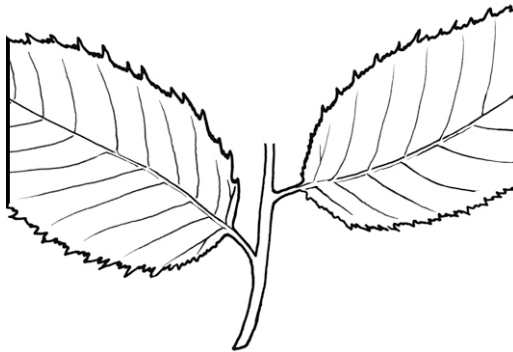
Leaf Characteristics

- Deciduous or evergreen?
- Arrangement on stem
- Simple or compound?
- Pinnate or palmate leaflets or veins
- Margins
- Base and tip features
- Special characteristics (smell, texture, stipules, glands, etc.)

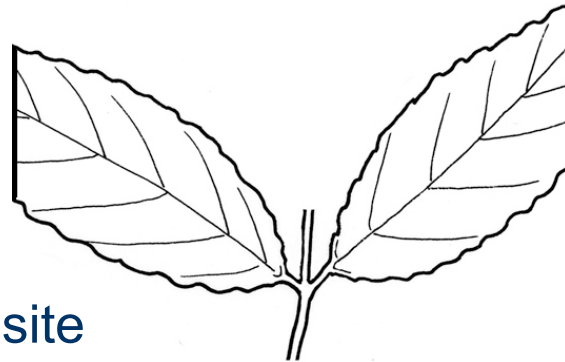
Leaf Parts



Leaf Arrangement



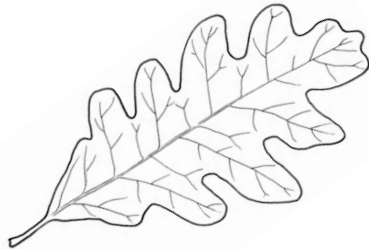
Alternate



Opposite

Simple vs. Compound

Simple – leaf has one part

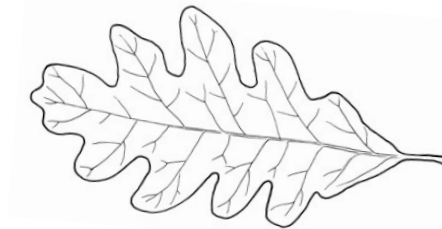


Compound – one leaf has multiple parts (leaflets)



Venation

Pinnate – One main vein starting at the petiole, with smaller ones branching off

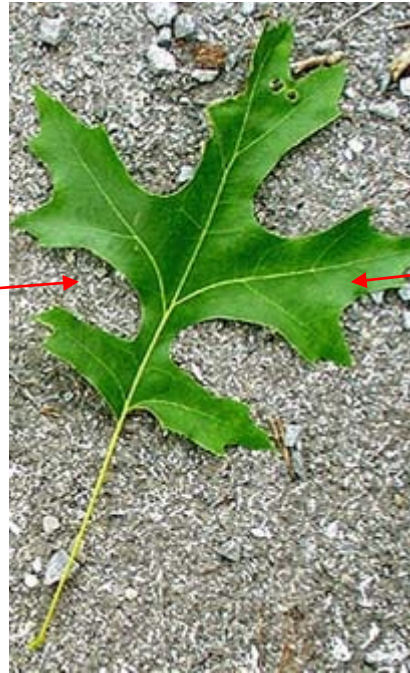


Palmate – Several main veins starting at the petiole, with smaller ones branching off



Lobes

Sinus



Lobe

Edges or Margins



Serrated



Entire



Doubly
Serrated

Needles



Characteristics?



Characteristics?



Characteristics?



Characteristics?



Bark Characteristics

- Terminology is somewhat subjective.
- Descriptive terms may include smooth, scaly, ridged, furrowed, fissured, platy, blocky, netted, and more!

Characteristics?



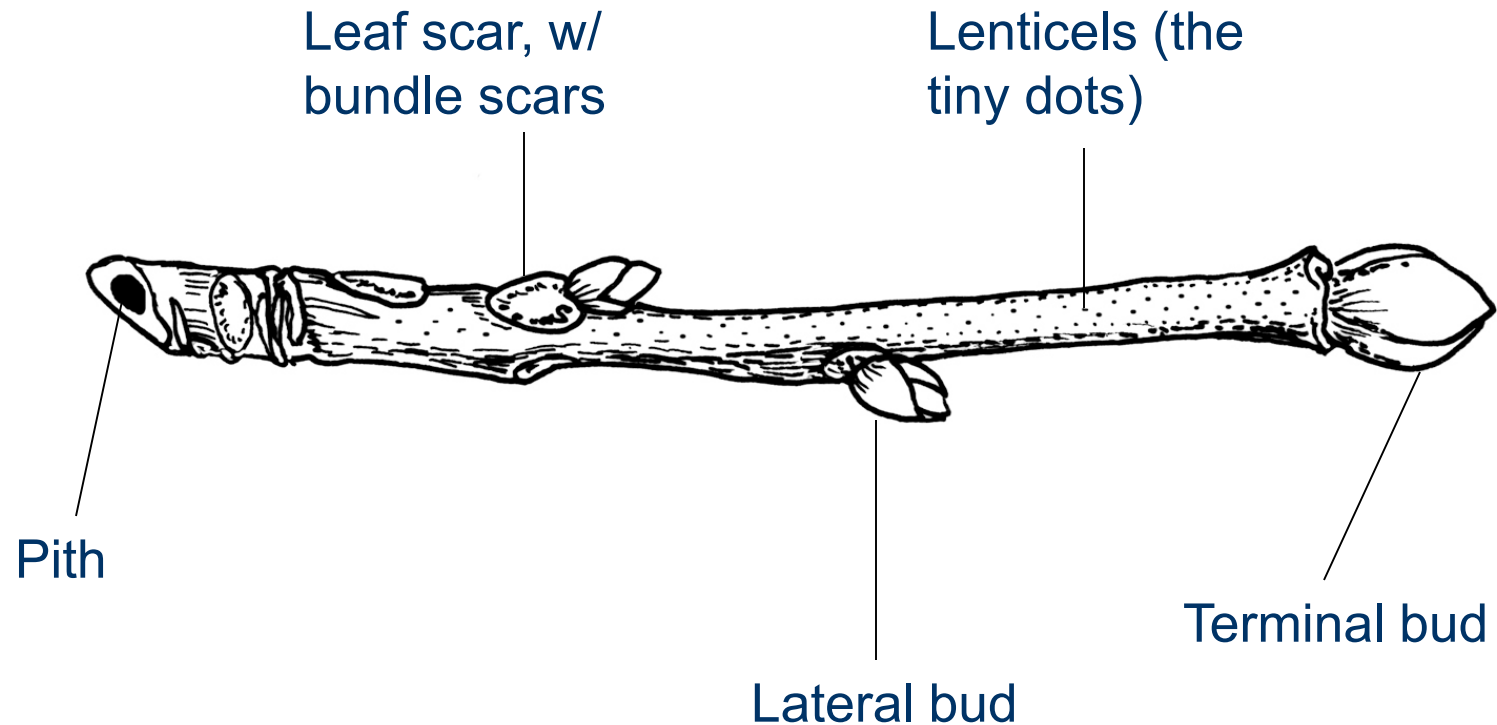
Characteristics?



Characteristics?



Twig Characteristics



Tools to Aid in Identification

- Your senses – sight, touch, smell
- Dichotomous keys and field guides
- Hand lens - details matter!
- Optional: sharp knife or clippers

Practice, practice, practice!