Nature Trail
Species Information

Eastern White Pine *Pinus strobus* 5 long needles (up to 5 inches) per bundle. Tallest evergreen in Northeast. Colonists prized the tree for its height, strength, straightness, and light weight. Foliage high in Vitamin C.	
Eastern Hemlock *Tsuga canadensis* Evergreen with short, dark green needles above and 2 white stripes below. The oldest known Northeast specimen was 555 years old. Bark was harvested for use in the tanning industry. At-risk in parts of its range from the invasive Hemlock Woolly Adelgid.	
American Beech *Fagus grandifolia* Leaves with prominent veins alternate on stem. Healthy bark is dull gray & smooth. High-fat nuts are an important food for wildlife.	
Holes made by a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (woodpecker) in an Eastern Hemlock Sapsuckers drill neatly spaced rows of small holes in tree bark & return to feed on the sap that collects in the depressions. This is the only species of sapsucker found in the Northeast. Only 1% of Eastern Hemlocks die from sapsuckers.	
Balsam Fir *Abies balsamea* Needles are rounded at the tip and appear to lie flat on the twig. Only fir native to the Northeast. Resin blisters form on the bark of young trees. Foliage is very aromatic - crush a few needles - it smells like Christmas!	

Striped Maple *Acer pensylvanicum*

Bark on young trees is smooth and green with vertical stripes. Short-lived (<100 years) & slow growing understory tree of northern hardwood forests. Also called Goosefoot Maple for its very large 3-lobed leaf. Important food source for many herbivores such as moose and white-tailed deer.



Wood Fern *Dryopteris sp.*

Ferns reproduce by spores, not seeds. About 15 of the 300-400 *Dryopteris* species found worldwide occur in NY. Fiddleheads and fronds are toxic to most animals. This family of ferns is known to hybridize, making identification difficult.



Sugar Maple *Acer saccharum*

Leaves & twigs are opposite. Space between the lobes (called a sinus) is "U" shaped. Remember that the word "sugar" has a "u." Leaves have 5 points: 3 are long with the 2 at the base shorter. Colonists learned to boil the sap to create syrup from indigenous people, who probably learned it from watching red squirrels "tap" young sugar maple saplings.



Red Spruce *Picea rubens*

Short stiff needles are on peg-like stalks. Needles are pointed at the tip & appear to encircle the twig. Scaley bark is said to resemble burnt corn flakes. Spruce gum (forerunner to chewing gum) was obtained commercially from resin in the bark.



Broom Moss *Dicranum sp.*

Mosses are considered the oldest plants in the world, originating ~470 million years ago. About 400 moss species can be found in Adirondack Park. Mosses reproduce by spores, not seeds.



Yellow Birch *Betula alleghaniensis*

Common name refers to its golden bark when young. A Raquette Lake specimen was over 365 years old. Leaves, stems & seeds are important wildlife foods. Twigs have a wintergreen scent when scratched.



Smokey-eyed Boulder Lichen *Porpidia albocaerulescens*

This is one of the most common "crust" lichens found on rocks and boulders. Lichens are a symbiotic partnership of a fungus & an alga(e). Blue-grey cup-shaped reproductive structures are surrounded by a dark ring - the smokey eye. In Latin, "porpido" means “to cover,” and “albocaerulescens” means “white-blue.”



Ground Elder *Aegopodium podagraria*

Invasive & non-native (from Europe & Asia). Member of the Carrot family (*Apiaceae*). Leaves were used to treat gout & arthritis.



American Mountain Ash *Sorbus americana*

Alternate compound leaves with leaflets having serrated edges. Member of the Rose family. Leaves, twigs, bark, and berries are important wildlife foods. Also known as the Rowan Tree.



Long Beech Fern *Phegopteris connectilis*

Bottom 2 leaflets noticeably point downward. Scientific name (*connecto*) may refer to leaflets being stemless and "connected" to the blade stalk. Arching frond is 6-14 inches long & up to 10 inches wide. Green blade stalk is densely covered with brown scales and hairy.



Northern White Cedar *Thuja occidentalis*

Aromatic bark and evergreen leaves, which are scale-like & flattened. Member of Cypress family. Frequently found in wetlands or uplands with alkaline soil. Also known as Arborvitae, the tree of life.



Cinnamon Fern *Osmundastrum cinnamomeum*

Common name refers to the brown, cinnamon color at base of the fronds. Spores (for reproduction) are found on a separate frond. Fossils for this species date back 75-180 million years. Very large fern, typically 2-3 feet tall but can reach 5-6 feet in height.



Interrupted Fern *Claytosmunda claytoniana*

Large, robust fern that can reach 3 feet in height. Seems to prefer shaded environments but can occur in many habitat types. Common name refers to the gap in mature fronds where the spore-bearing leaflets are located. Scientific name is a tribute to 18th century English-born Virginia botanist John Clayton.



White Ash *Fraxinus americana*

Leaves & twigs are opposite. Compound leaf with 5-11 oval-shaped, scallop-edged leaflets. Mature trees are identifiable by their grayish-brown bark divided into narrow, vertical fissures. Famous for its use in baseball bats and basket making.



Quaking Aspen *Populus tremuloides*

Name refers to the way the leaves shake or "tremble" in the wind. Called "nut-kie-e" by the Iroquois meaning "noisy leaf." A 108-acre grove of Aspen clones in Oregon is the world's largest organism. A long, flattened leafstalk is what allows the leaves to flutter in the breeze.



Ostrich Fern *Matteuccia struthiopteris*

Common name refers to the shape of the frond resembling the ostrich feather. Typically grows in vase-like clusters. Fiddleheads are considered a delicacy. Spores (for reproduction) are on a separate frond.



Sensitive Fern *Onoclea sensibilis*

Light green frond with prominent veins & wavy leaf edges. Common name refers to its sensitivity to frost. Usually found in wetlands. Spores (for reproduction) are on a separate frond.



Hobblebush *Viburnum lantanoides*

Opposite leaves with distinct veins & toothed edges. Common understory shrub of moist woods. Forms thickets of root suckers and pendulous branches that "hobble" hikers. Large, showy white flowers ripen into edible fruits.



Please don't disturb the plants; leave them for others to enjoy.