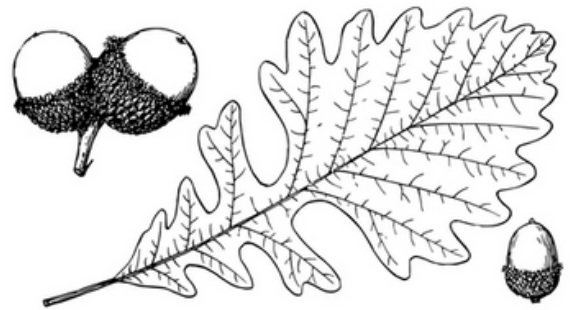


Exploring the Forest of Food



If we care for and
cultivate our forest,
it will nourish our souls
and bodies.

When can I find food in the forest?

Elderberry - July

Wild Raspberry - July/August

Wild Blackberry - July/August

Wild strawberries - July/August

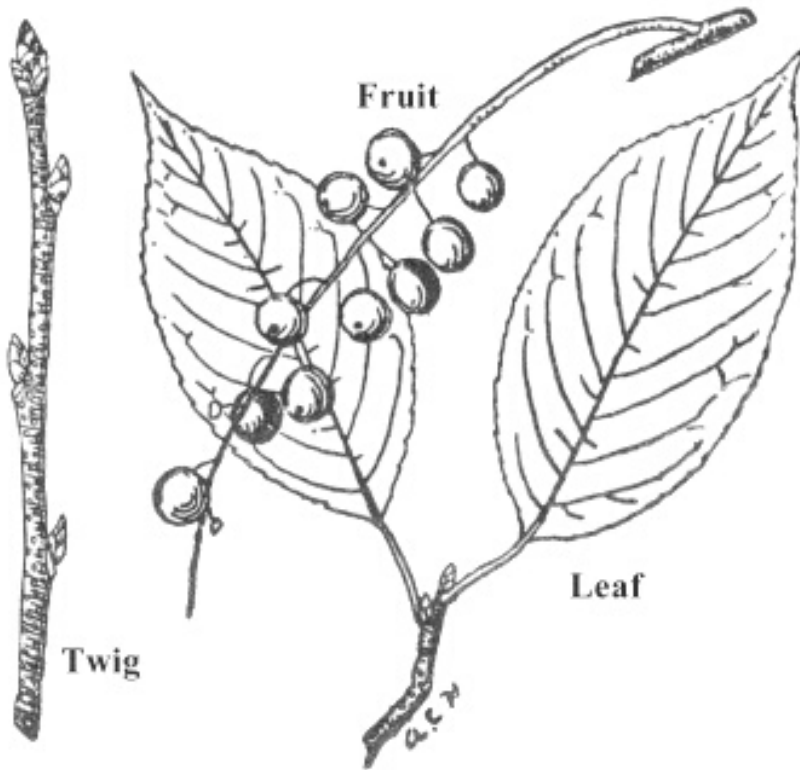
Paw paw - September

Bur Oak acorns - October

Winecap Mushrooms - October

Persimmon - October/ November

Sugar Maple - February



Black Cherry
Prunus serotina

Hello, my name is Black Cherry. Do you know why I have 'cherry' in my name? If you guessed that I produce cherries, you are correct! I produce a **stone fruit**, meaning I am soft and chewy on the outside and you can find my pit on the inside - which is like a little stone! I grow on uplands and I do not like when my roots stay wet. My bark looks like burnt potato chips and during the spring, my white blossoms make me look like I am dressed in lace!



Pawpaw
Asimina triloba

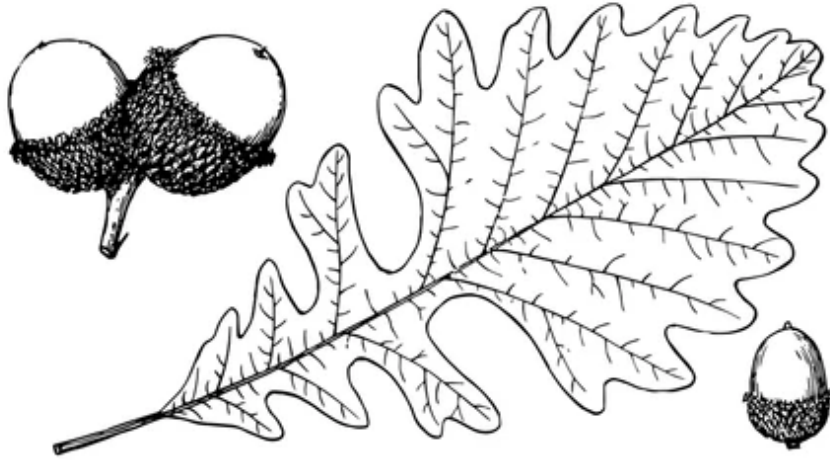
Well hello! My name is Pawpaw but some people call me the "Indiana Banana" or the "Hipster Mango." That's because I produce a large sweet edible fruit that almost tastes like a tropical treat such as a mild banana or mango! Have you ever had pawpaw pudding?



Sugar Maple
Acer saccharum

I am the Sugar Maple and if you boil my sap you will get a sweet delicious treat! Yum - maple syrup! According to the tradition of the Abenaki*, maple syrup is a special sweet gift that was given to us by our Creator. My leaves turn brilliant shades of orange and red in the fall. My leaf is "palmate" because it's shaped like your palm!

*The Abenaki are one of the First Nations of North America - learn more here: abenakitribe.org/maple-syrup



Bur Oak

Quercus macrocarpa

Howdy! I am a big burly Bur Oak! Did you know that acorns are my fruit?
My acorns are huge with big hairy acorn caps - so scientists call me
macrocarpa which means BIG FRUIT.



Black Walnut
Juglans nigra



Eastern Redbud
Cercis canadensis

Hello, my name is Redbud. My leaf is shaped like a heart and I create lots of pink blossoms that provide food for bees and other pollinators. With the change of seasons, my leaves turn from reddish to green to dark green to yellow. I am a **subcanopy** tree, which means that I am smaller and allow sunlight to shine between my branches and leaves. I am also a *legume* and I have a special ability to fix nitrogen in the soil to help other plants grow.



Cottonwood
Populus deltoides

My leaves shimmer, shake and quake in the breeze just like my sister the Quaking Aspen. The wind is my dear friend - my seeds are surrounded with cottony fluff that allows them to fly on the wings of the wind and be planted far and wide throughout the forest!



Black Willow

Salix nigra

Welcome! I am a willow and I don't mind if my roots stay soggy because I am *riparian*. This means that you will usually find me along creeks and rivers. You can also find me near ponds and other wet places. There are many different species of willow trees, my sister the Weeping Willow lets her branches droop all the way to the ground and it looks like she is weeping!



Dogwood
Cornus florida

Hello, I am Dogwood. My beautiful blossoms have four petals that grow in the shape of a cross. There are many legends about me. According to one Cherokee story, the Dogwood is associated with "Little People" who take care of others. My sour berries are edible and provide important food for wildlife such as bluebirds and chipmunks. Wild critters also snack on my flowers, leaves and even my twigs and bark!