**Leaf Dichotomous Key**

**Identification Guide**

**to the Fossil and Living Trees**

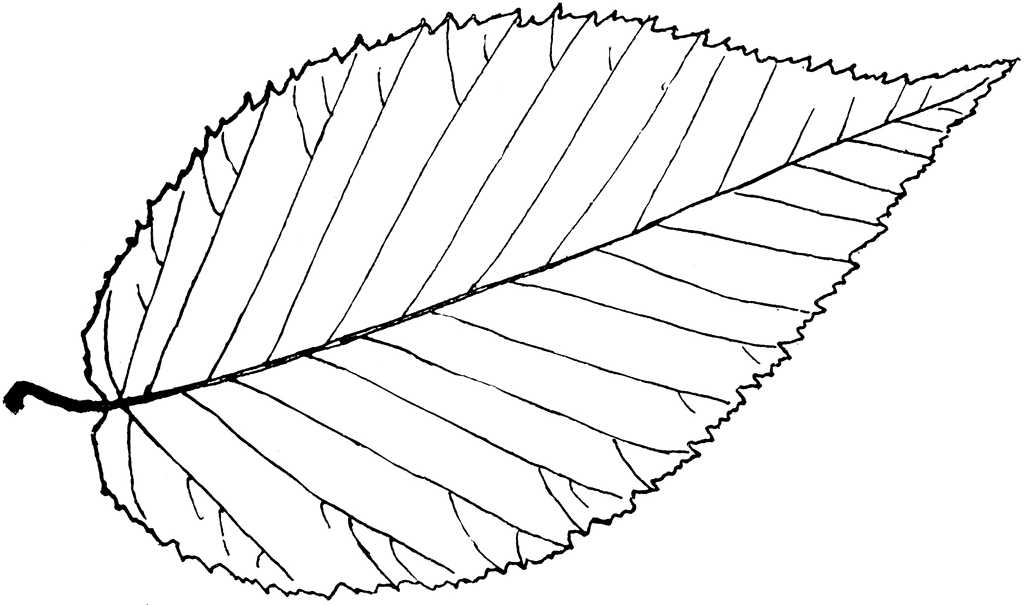
**of Florissant, CO**

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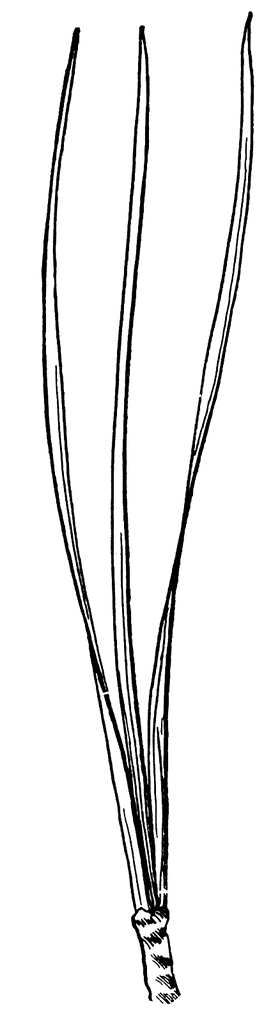
**Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument**

Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 1**

**Does the tree have flat, broad leaves, or skinny needles?**

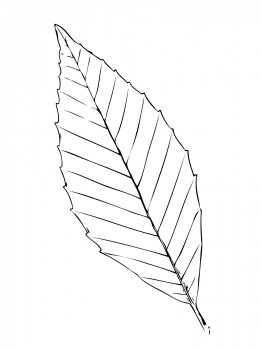
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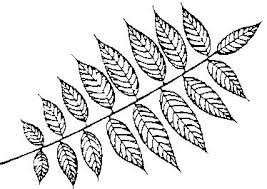
**Flat, broad leaves 🡺 Go to page 2.**

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**Skinny needles 🡺 Go to page 3.**

Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 2**

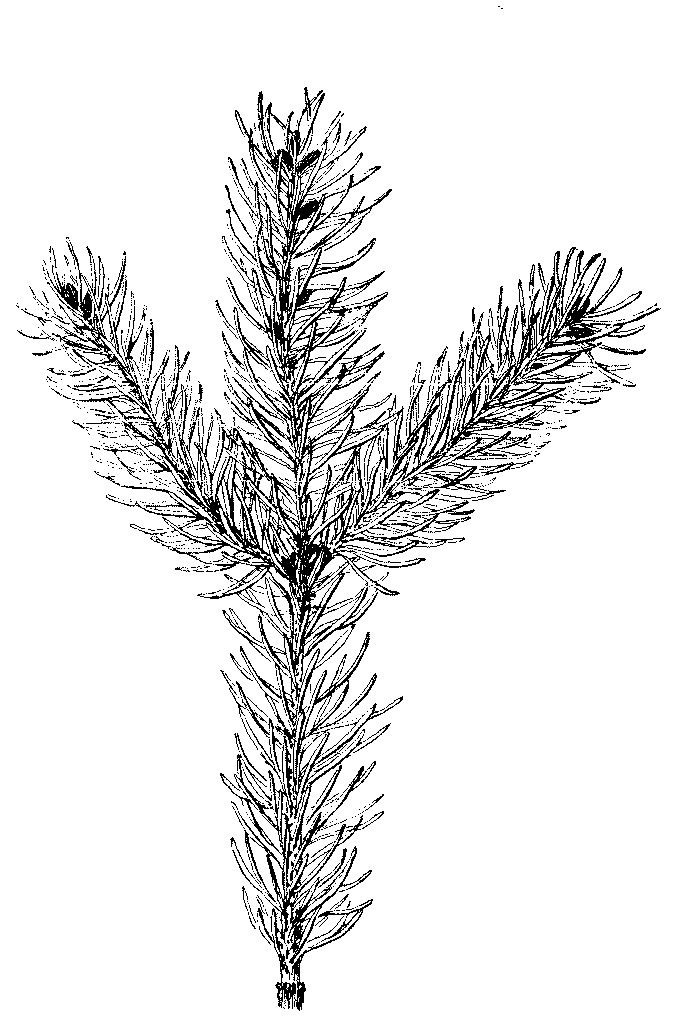
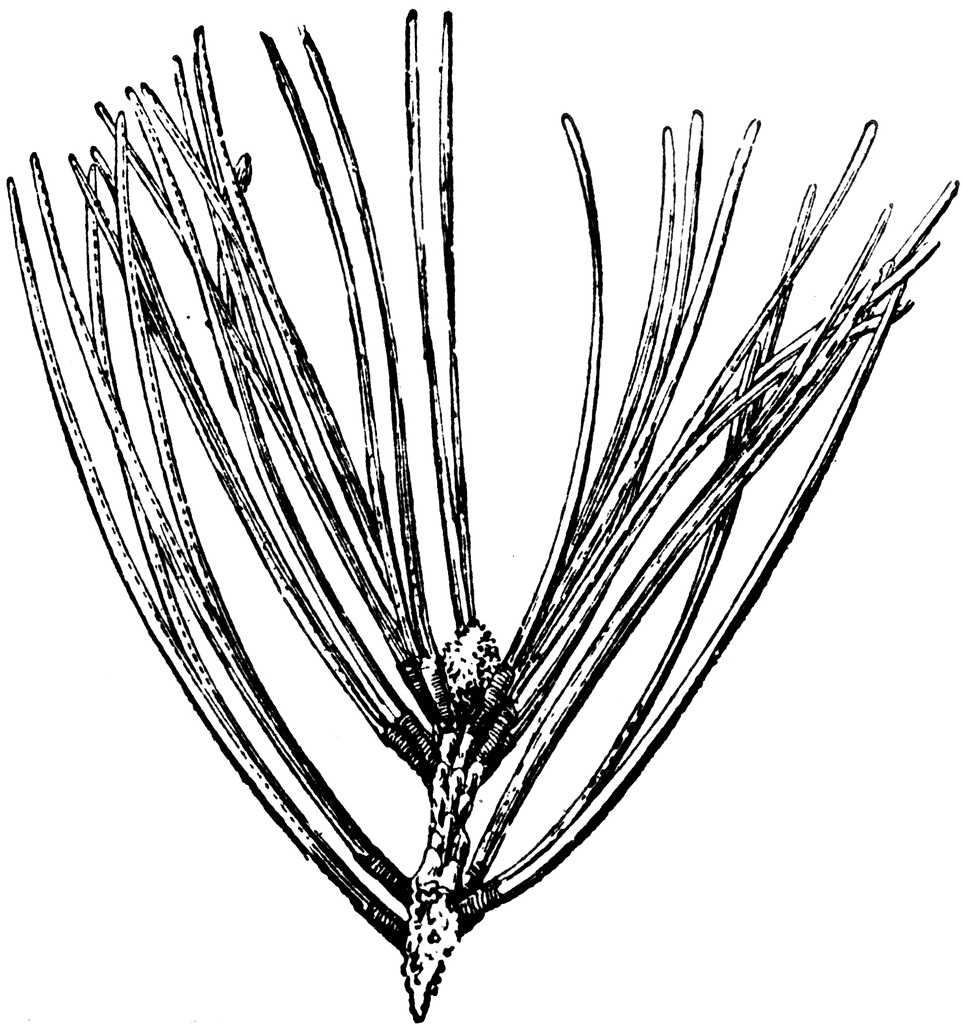
**Is the shape of the leaf simple (all one piece) or compound (branching into leaflets)? **

**Simple 🡺 Go to page 4.**

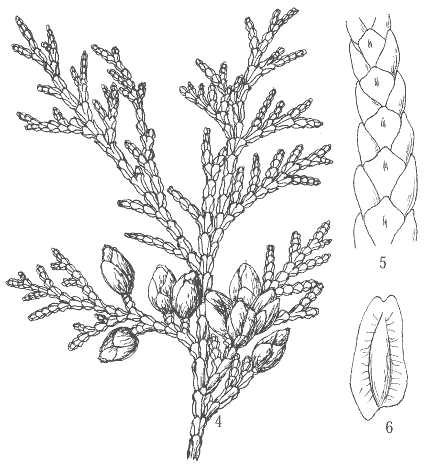
**Compound 🡺 Go to page 5.**

Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 3**

**Are the needles smooth and straight, or branches covered with tiny scales?**

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**Smooth and straight 🡺 Go to page 6.**

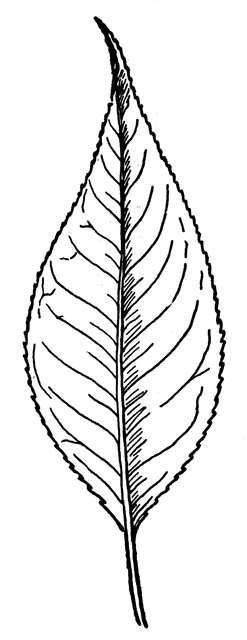
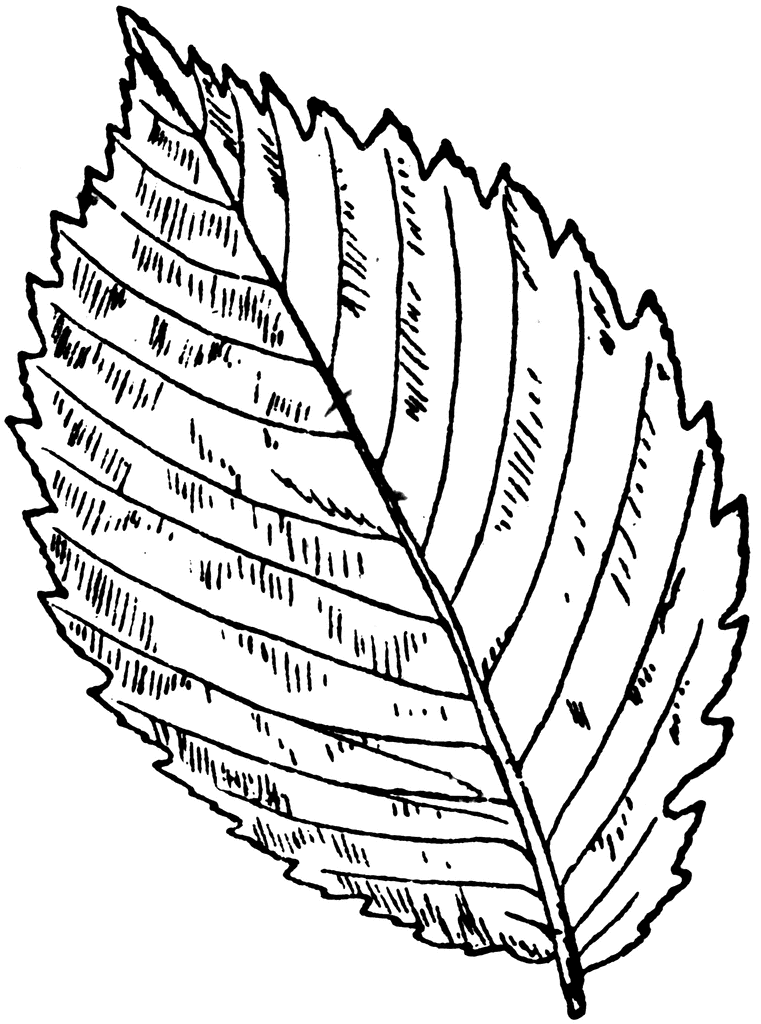
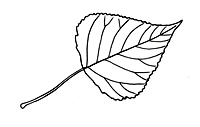
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**Tiny scales 🡺 Your tree is a:**

**Cedar.**

Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 4**

**Is the simple leaf lobed or not lobed?  Lobed 🡺 Go to page 7.**

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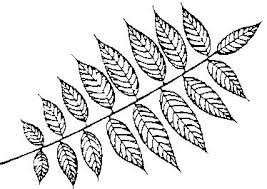
**Not Lobed 🡺 Go to page 8.**

Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 5**

**Does the compound leaf have bigger leaflets on the end, or are all leaflets about the same size? **

**Bigger leaflets on the end 🡺 Your tree is a:**

**Hickory.**

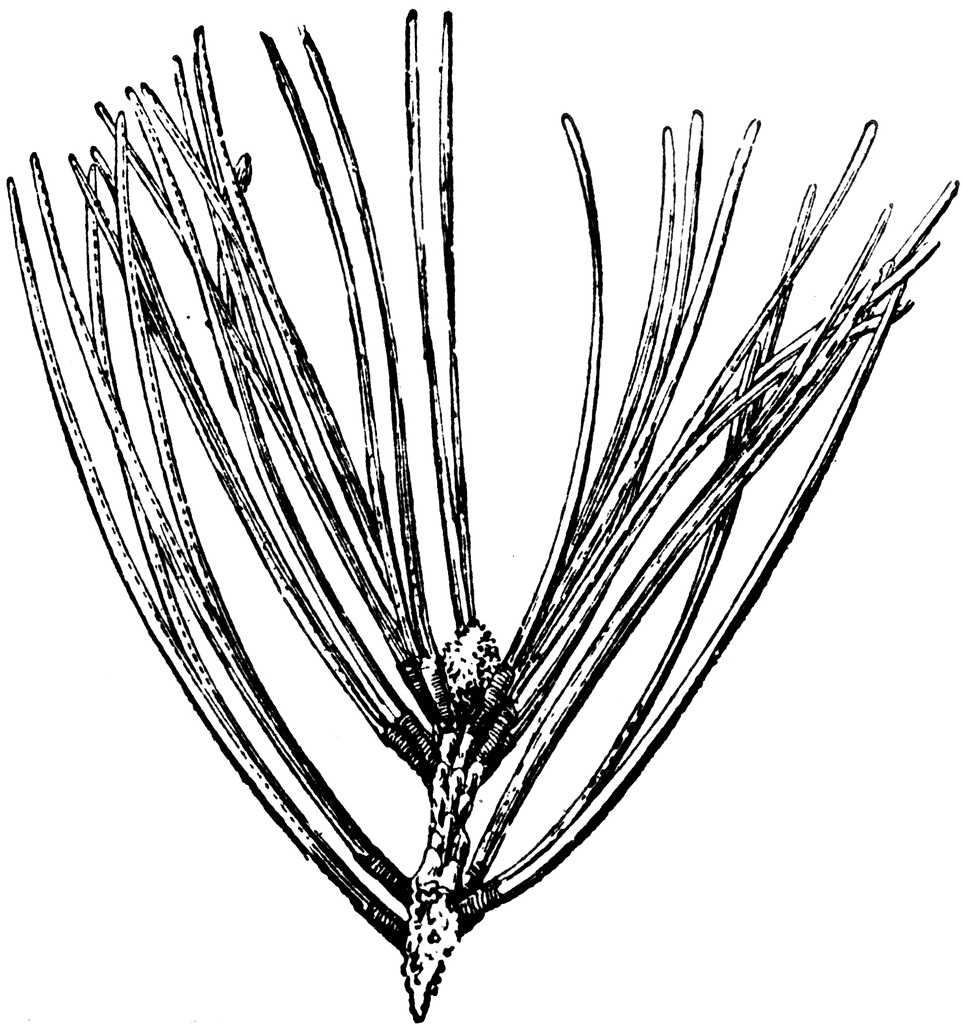
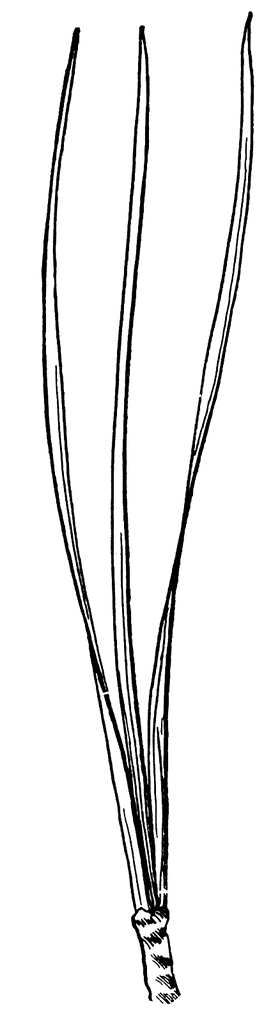
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**All about the same size 🡺 Your tree is a:**

**Walnut.**

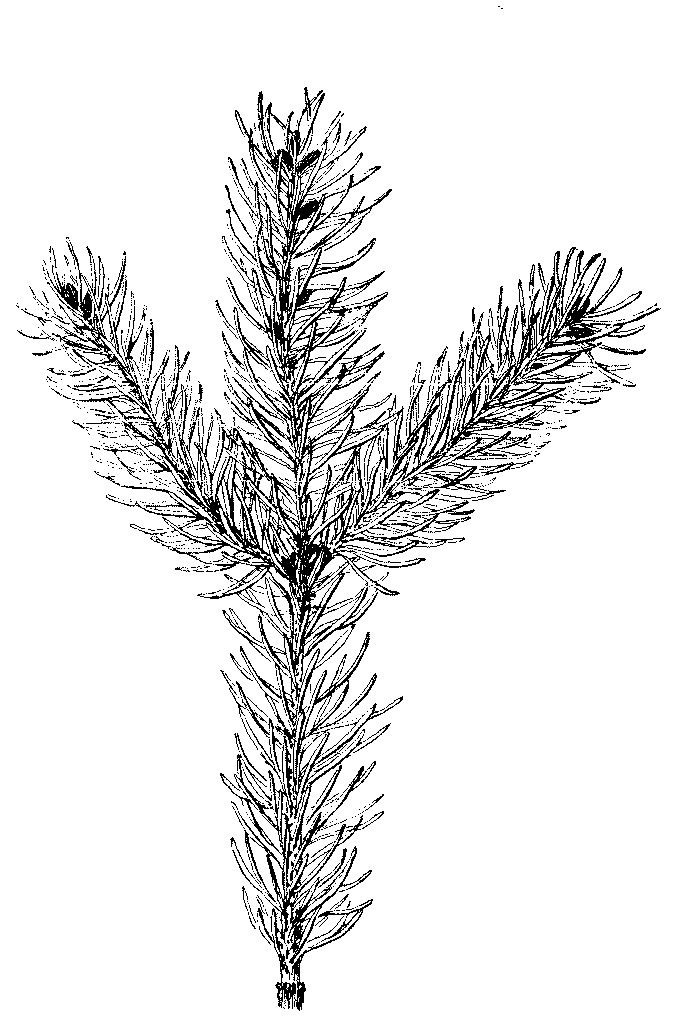
Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 6**

**Are the needles attached to the branch in groups, or individually (one needle at a time)?**

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**Groups of needles 🡺 Your tree is a:**

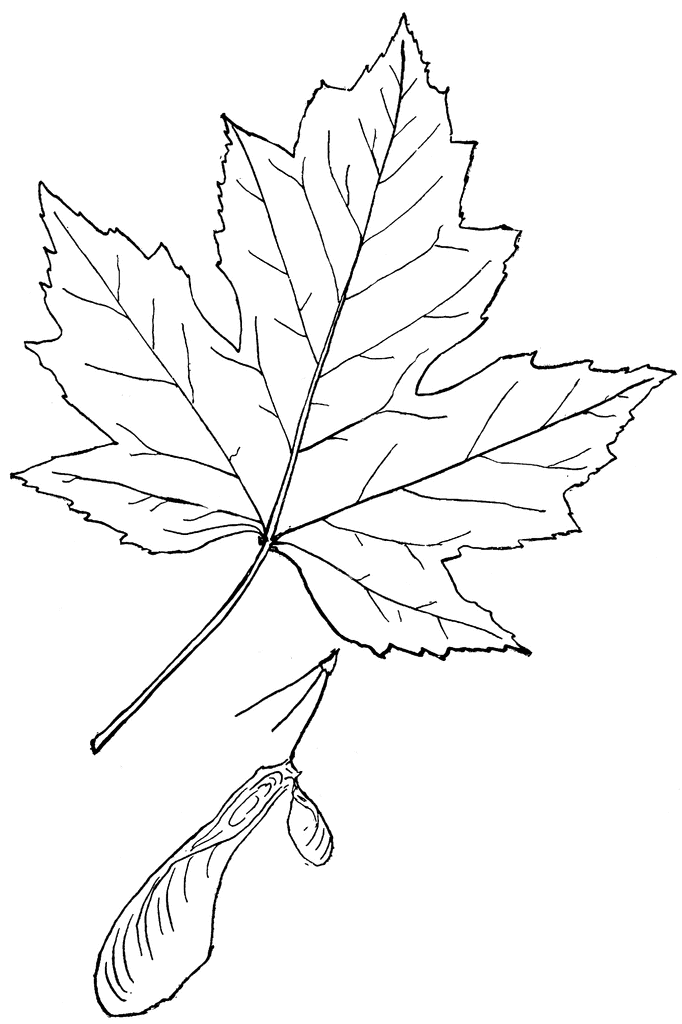
**Pine.**

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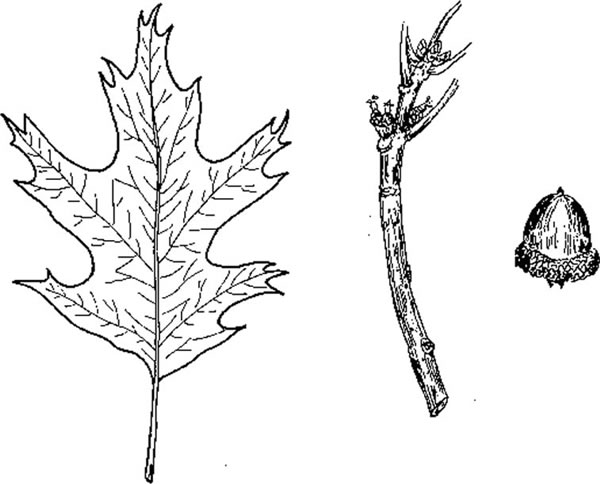
**Individual needles 🡺 Go to page 9.**

Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 7**

**How many lobes (connected sections) does the leaf have?**

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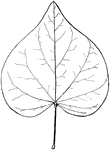
**3 lobes, pointing forward 🡺 Your tree is a:**

**Maple. **

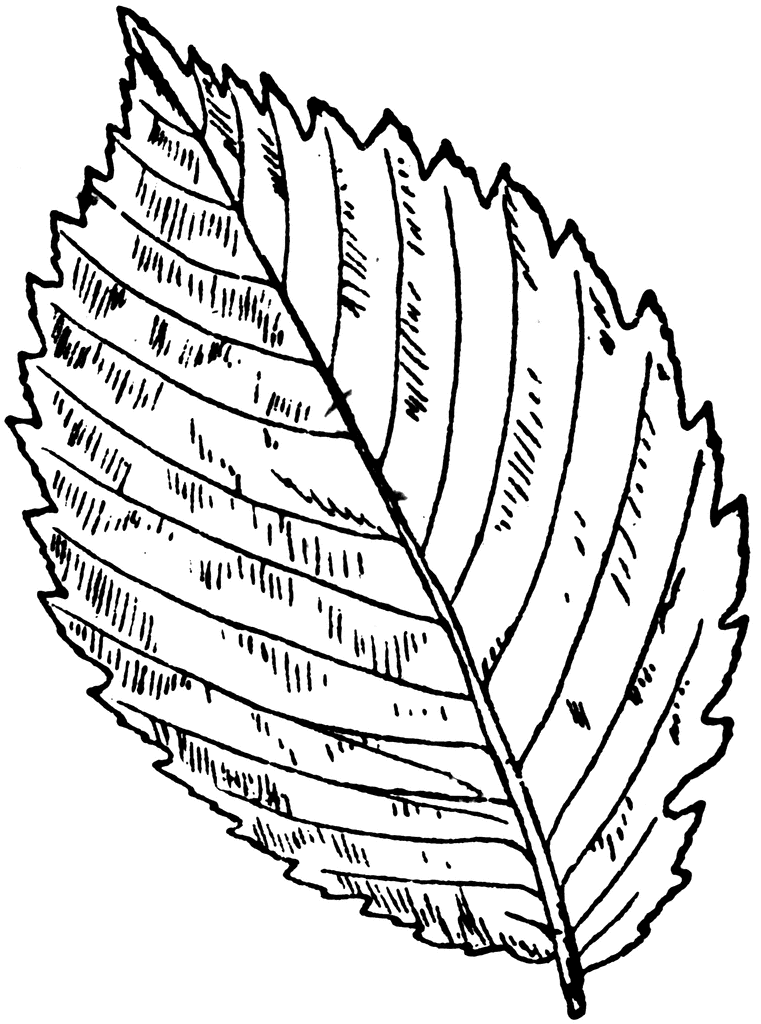
**5-7 lobes, pointing out 🡺 Your tree is an:**

**Oak.**

Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 8**

**Does the leaf have smooth edges or toothed (jagged or bumpy) edges? **

**Smooth edges 🡺 Go to page 10.**

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**Toothed edges 🡺 Go to page 11.**

Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 9**

**Are the needles very short, or medium-length? **

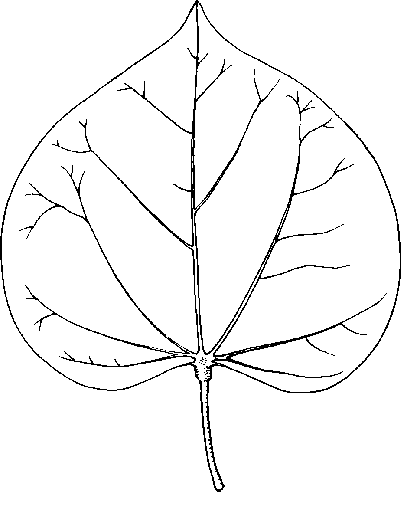
**Very short needles 🡺 Go to page 12.**

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**Medium-length needles 🡺 Go to page 13.**

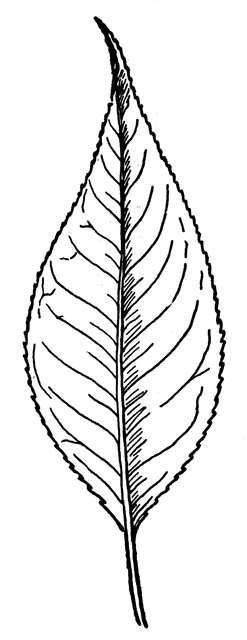
Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 10**

**Is the shape of the leaf short and rounded, or long and narrow?**

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**Short, rounded leaf 🡺 Your tree is a:**

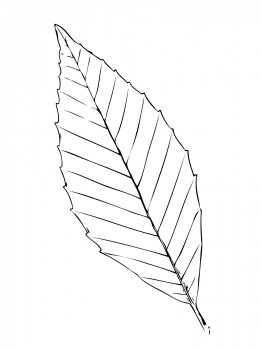
**Redbud.**

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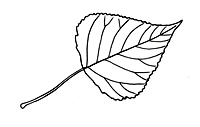
**Long, narrow leaf 🡺 Go to page 14.**

Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 11**

**Are the veins inside the leaf very straight and do not branch, or slightly curved and branching?**

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**Straight, do not branch 🡺 Go to page 15.**

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**Curved, and do branch 🡺 Go to page 16.**

Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 12**

**Does the tree have feathery needles and small cones, or sharp needles and berries?**

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**Feathery needles, cones 🡺 Your tree is a:**

**Redwood.**

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**Sharp needles, berries 🡺 Your tree is a:**

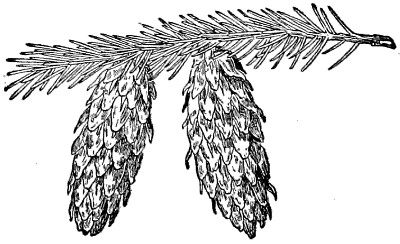
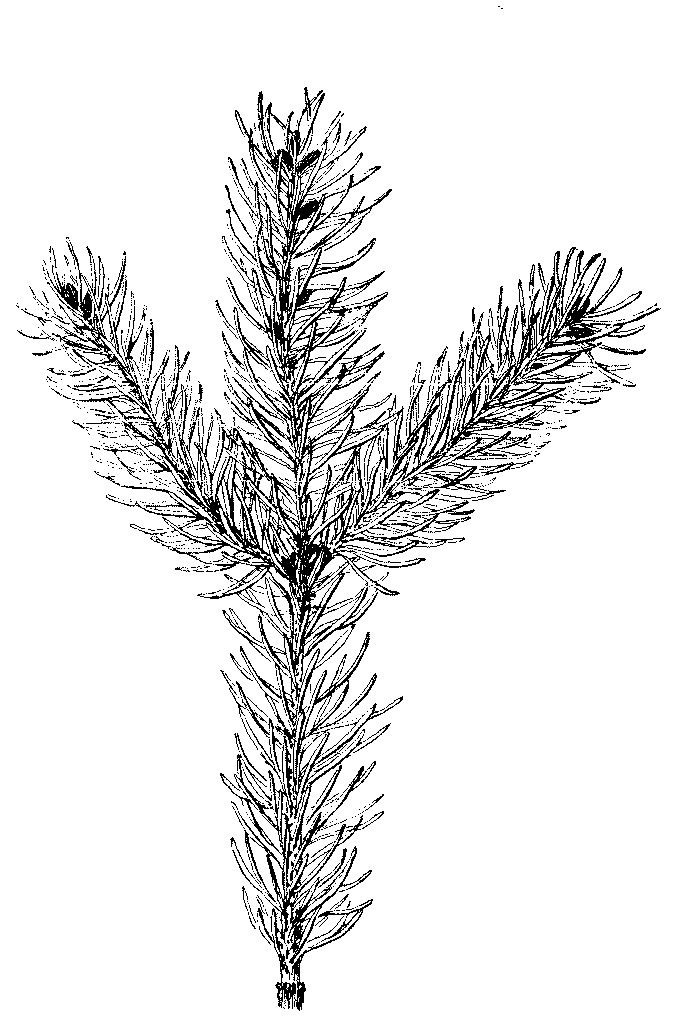
**Juniper.**

Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 13**

**Does the tree have soft needles and cones with bracts (fancy frills on the cone), or stiff needles and cones without bracts? **

**Soft needles, bracts 🡺 Your tree is a:**

**Fir.**

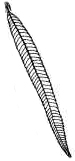
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**Stiff needles, no bracts 🡺 Your tree is a:**

**Spruce.**

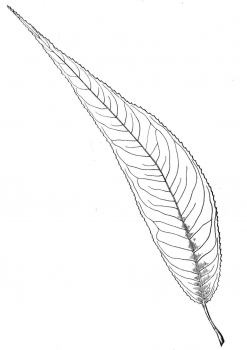
Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 14**

**Is the shape of the leaf straight (about the same width along its entire length), or tapered (wide at the base and narrow near the tip)? **

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**Straight 🡺 Your tree is a:**

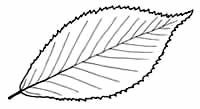
**Willow.**

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**Tapered 🡺 Your tree is a:**

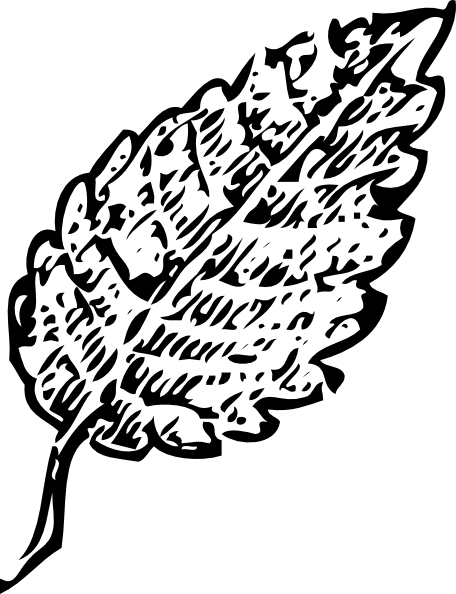
**Poplar.**

Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 15**

**Does the leaf have finely-toothed edges (many small, sharp points), or large round-toothed edges (larger, rounded bulges)? **

**Finely-toothed edges 🡺 Your tree is a:**

**Hornbeam.**

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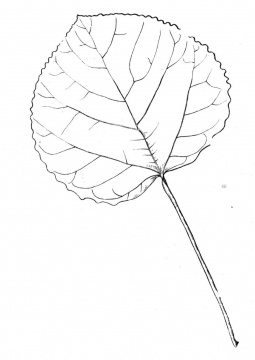
**Round-toothed edges 🡺 Your tree is a:**

**Beech**

**(Extinct relative).**

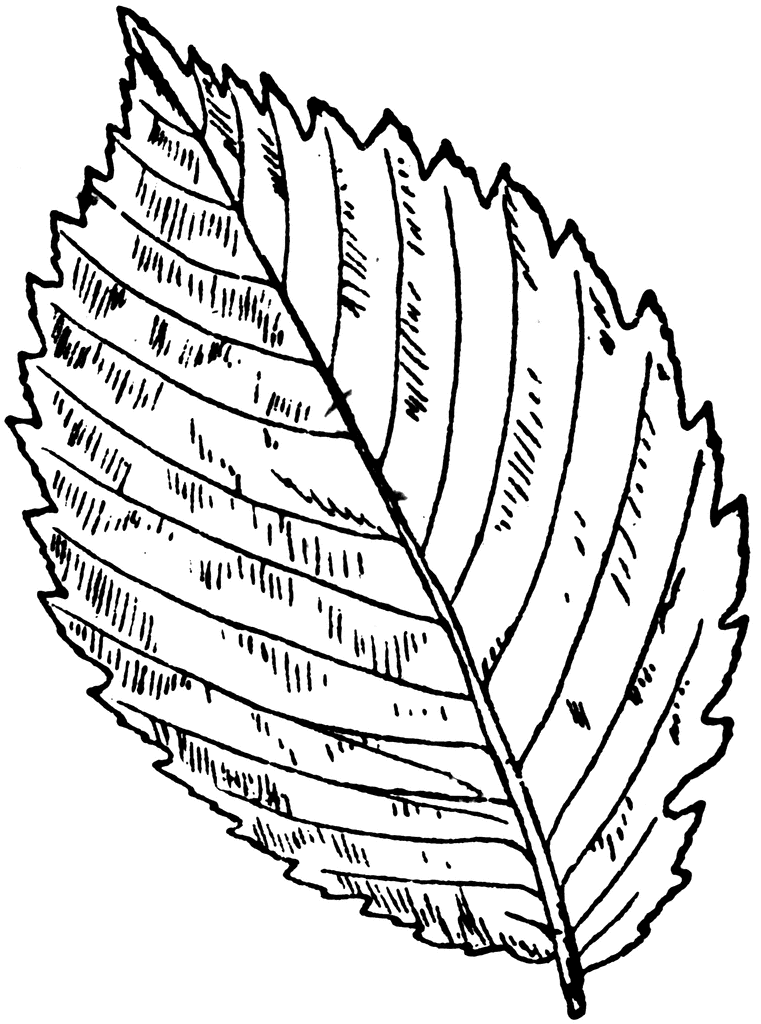
Leaf Dichotomous Key – Trees of Florissant, CO **Page 16**

**Is the shape of the leaf short and rounded, or long and tapered (wide near the base and narrow near the tip)?**

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**Short and rounded 🡺 Your tree is an:**

**Aspen.**

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**Long and tapered 🡺 Your tree is an:**

**Elm.**