Teacher Edition

EAGLE POINT NATURE PRESERVE

Be an original.

Plant Loop Trail Guide

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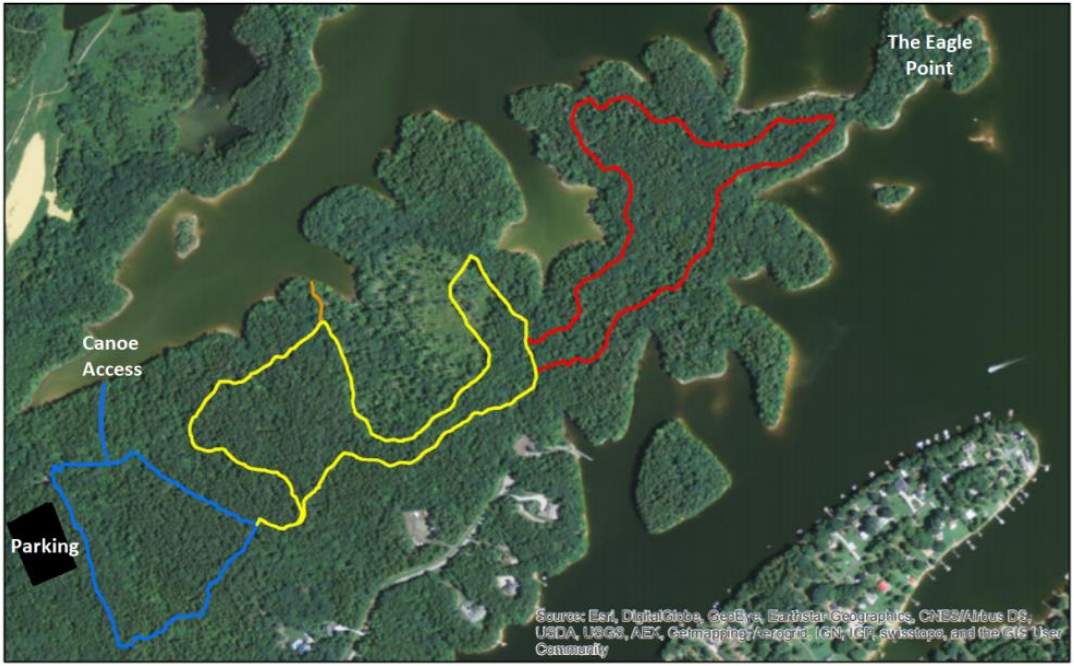
Eagle Point Nature Preserve
Trails & Features



0 0.075 0.15 0.3 Miles

Map produced by:
Stephen Beaver
2016

Legend

- Plant Loop
- Goldeneye Cove Trail
- Herons Cove
- Eagle Point Loop

General Information

- Eagle Point Nature Preserve is composed of 100 acres owned outright by Rowan County. This land was purchased by a group of local individuals and given to the Land Trust for Central N.C.. They placed a legally binding Conservation Easement on it and then donated it to the County. The easement insures that the property will be maintained as a natural area for the benefit of wildlife and the citizens of Rowan County.

- An additional 100 acres is planned to be added as a long-term lease from Aluminum Company of America. This addition will add the projected Point Loop Trail and includes some of the more diverse topography of the property.
- The property consists of a variety of forest types that are typical to central N.C. and is entirely forested.
- The trail system was designed as three back to back loops because it is not difficult to get turned around here.
- The planned trails will total over 4 miles of walking. The Plant Loop Trail is just under one mile, and the Goldeneye Cove Trail just over 1 ½ miles.

- Currently the Point Loop Trail is just in planning, but will add about 2 more miles.

Trees & Plants

Winged Elm

Description

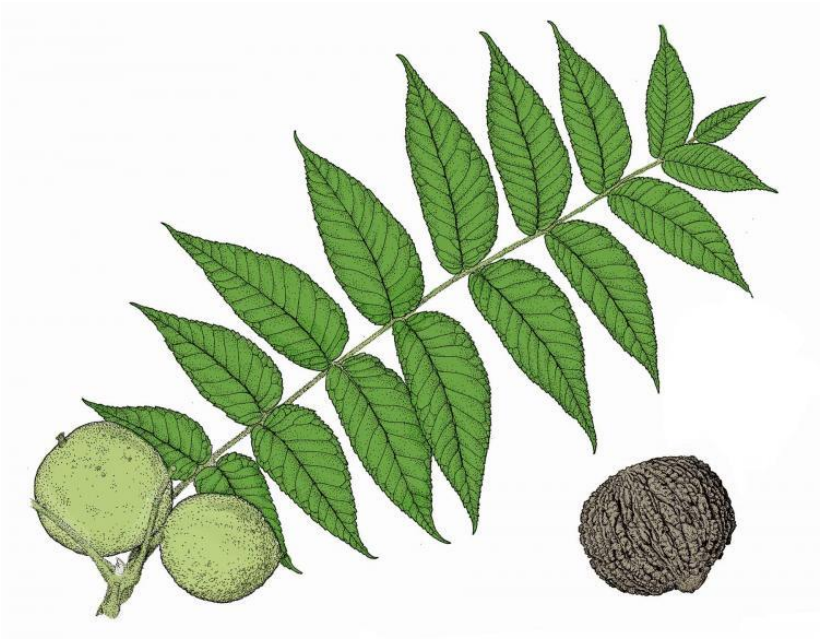
Ulmus alata

a.k.a. Cork Elm or Wahoo

Winged Elm is a small to medium size tree that is usually less than 50 feet tall and 1½ feet in diameter. Wide, corky ridges are usually present on the branches of this tree giving it its name. This small tree is sometimes used a yard tree around houses. It is too small to be commercially important in the lumber market. Dutch Elm disease, which has been deadly to most Elms, does not usually affect Winged Elms.

Trees & Plants

Black Walnut



Description

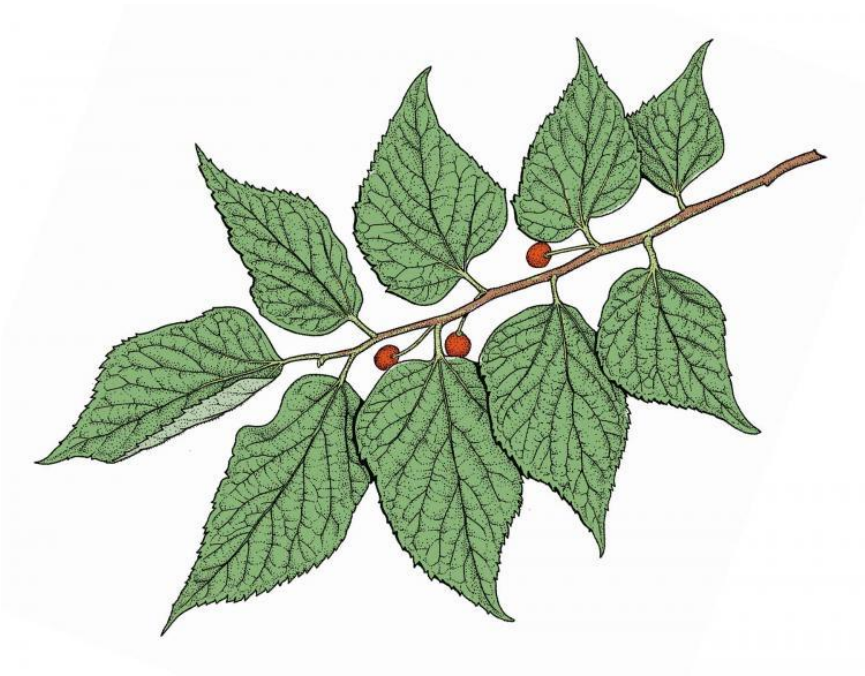
Juglans nigra

a.k.a. Eastern Black Walnut or American Walnut

Black Walnut is a medium to large tree that can reach 70-90 feet tall and 2 to 4 feet in diameter. Black Walnut trees are one of the scarcest and most coveted native hardwoods. The strong demand for this tree for furniture, gunstocks, and veneer means that this tree is one of the trees most often planted in hardwood plantations.

Trees & Plants

Hackberry



Description

Celtis occidentalis

a.k.a. Common Hackberry, Nettle-Tree, Hoop Ash, Beaverwood, Northern Hackberry, American Hackberry

Hackberry is a medium to large tree that can reach 60 feet in height and 1½ to 2 feet in diameter. The bark is smooth but clusters of warty growths protrude from the smooth surface at random places. The leaves often bear rounded galls caused by tiny jumping plant lice.

Trees & Plants

Poison Ivy

Description

Rhus rodicans

Poison Ivy is a poisonous plant that can take the appearance of a vine or a shrub. This plants appearance varies widely based on the region and specific environment where it grows. All parts of the plant contain volatile oil that can cause severe skin inflammation, itching, and blistering. There is an old rhyme that can help you steer clear of this plant: “Leaves of three, leave them be!” While there are other plants with leaf clusters of threes, both Poison Ivy and Poison Oak share this trait so it is best to stay away from all plants that identify with the rhyme.

Trees & Plants

Eastern Red Cedar

Description

Juniperus virginiana

a.k.a. Cedar or Red Juniper

Eastern Red Cedar is a small to medium size evergreen tree that can reach 40 to 60 feet in height and 1 to 2 feet in diameter. This tree is the most widespread conifer in the Eastern U.S. Only female Red Cedars grow the bluish colored fruits. This tree is not a true cedar; it is actually a member if the Juniper genus of trees.

Nature Zone # 1

Once you have passed the Eastern Red Cedar tree you will notice on your right hand side a patch of woods where no tall trees are growing and deep grooves on the ground about the width of car tires apart. This is an old wagon road used by the occupants of this land 50, 60 or maybe even 100 years ago. Nature takes a long time to recover from the compaction of soil caused by road beds. This is one of the reasons old road beds where used as much as possible in the construction of the trails here at Eagle Point.

Nature Zone # 1 Cont.

This old wagon road now serves as a wildlife corridor where wildflowers, trees and other plants can use to spread out and disperse throughout the forest.

Trees & Plants

Dogwood

Description

Cornus florida

a.k.a. Eastern Flowering Dogwood

Dogwood is a small tree seldom reaching more than 20 feet in height and ½ foot in diameter. This is a fast-growing, short-lived tree. It is shade tolerant and is a common understory tree. Dogwood produces berries that are consumed by a variety of wildlife but are poisonous to humans.

Trees & Plants

Water Oak

Description

Quercus nigra

a.k.a. Possum Oak, Spotted Oak, Red Oak

Water Oak is a medium to large tree with the capacity to grow over 90 feet in height and 2½ feet in diameter. Water Oak is a relatively fast-growing Oak that does well on a wide variety of growing sites and is widely planted as a shade or street tree throughout the south.

Trees & Plants

Sparkleberry

Description

Vaccinium arboreum

a.k.a. Farkleberry

Sparkleberry is a shrub that can grow to reach 7½ to 12½ feet in height with a diameter of 14 inches. This shrub is a member of the blueberry genus but unlike the blueberries we eat these berries have a very bad taste. Wildlife such as deer and birds do use these berries as a food source.

Trees & Plants

Virginia Pine

Description

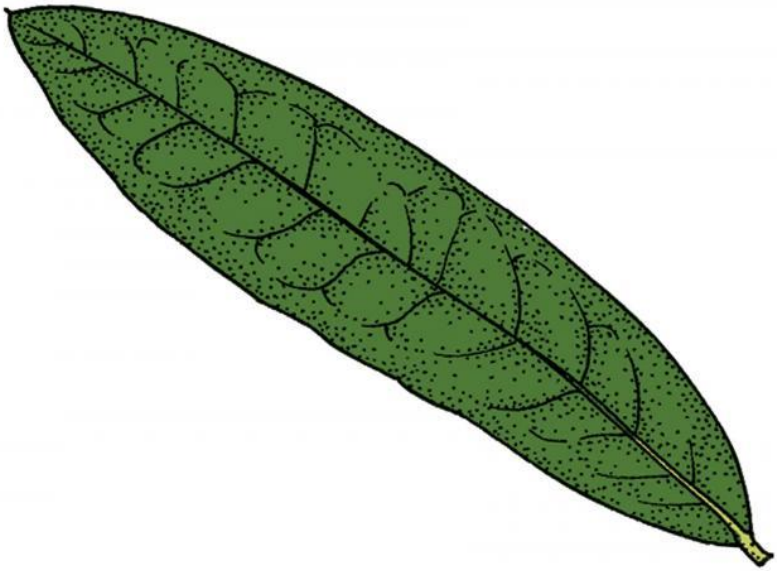
Pinus virginiana

a.k.a. Field Pine, Jersey Pine, Spruce Pine

Virginia Pine is a medium size evergreen tree that usually grows to 60 feet in height and 1 to 1½ feet in diameter. This tree is a pioneer species that colonizes disturbed sites and abandoned fields. It is short-lived and shallow-rooted. The wood of Virginia Pine contains very long fibers, making it a premium source of pulpwood for paper. The life span of a typical stand is 60-80 years before the trees start to fall.

Trees & Plants

Willow Oak



Description

Quercus phellos

a.k.a. Black Oak, Peach Oak, Pin Oak, Swamp Willow Oak

Willow Oak is a medium to large tree that can reach in excess of 80 feet in height and 2½ feet in diameter. Willow Oak is a popular street and shade tree that can easily be transplanted due to its shallow roots. It is easily distinguishable from most other Oaks due to its narrow leaves that lack lobes or teeth like other Oak leaves have. While the foliage resembles that of Willows, it is recognized as an Oak by the acorns it produces.

Nature Zone # 2

You will notice after you pass by the Willow Oak that there is a metal bridge over a long, narrow ditch. We are not sure what made this mystery ditch but any line this straight is usually man made. We know that this land was once the site of an old homestead. Remains of the home can be found off the path at the start of the Plant Loop Trail. The house was built in the 1800s and was occupied until about 1914. Our best guess is that this narrow ditch was dug here to help drain a field or mark a property boundary line at one point.

Trees & Plants

Black Cherry

Description

Prunus serotina

a.k.a. Wild Black Cherry, Rum Cherry, Cabinet Cherry

Black Cherry is a medium to large tree averaging 80 feet tall and 2 feet in diameter. This widespread species is the largest and most important native Cherry. Wild cherry syrup, a cough medicine is obtained from the bark and jelly and wine are prepared from the fruit. This tree is a favorite home for Eastern Tent Caterpillars.

Trees & Plants

Red Maple

Description

Acer rubrum

a.k.a. Scarlet Maple, Swamp Maple, Water Maple, White Maple, Soft Maple

Red Maple is a medium to large tree that can reach 60 to 90 feet in height and 1½ to 2½ feet in diameter. Red Maple is harvested and marketed as Soft Maple. It has some value for maple syrup production, but its greatest value is being one of the leading furniture woods.

Trees & Plants

Sweet Gum

Description

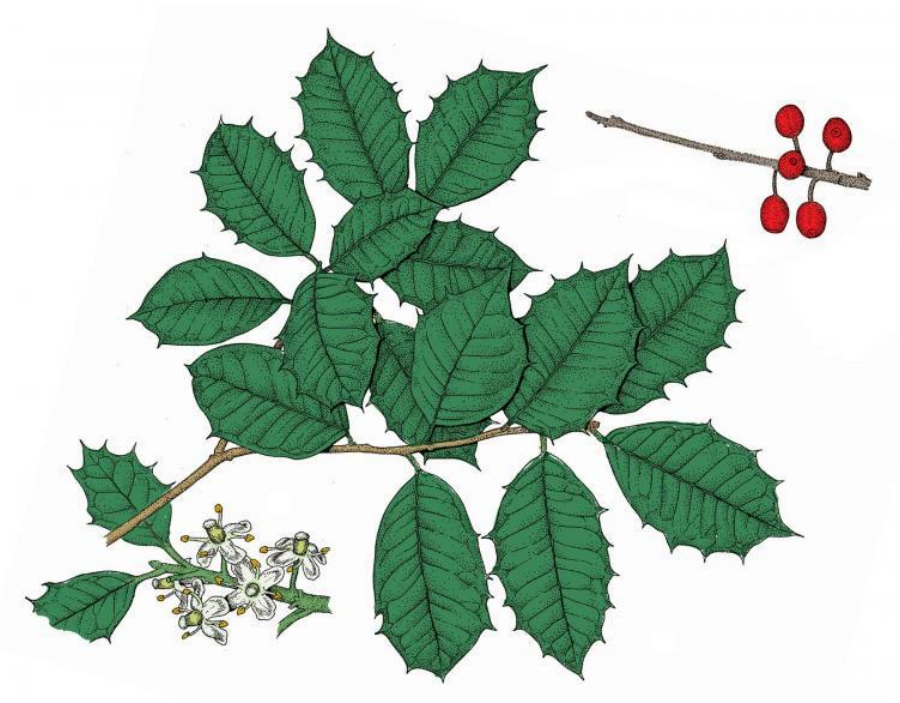
Liquidambar styraciflua

a.k.a. Blisted, Redgum, Sapgum, Star-leaf Gum

Sweetgum is a large tree that can grow over 80 feet in height and 4 feet in diameter. It is an important timber tree, second in production after Oaks among hardwoods. In pioneer days, a gum was obtained from the trunks of the tree by peeling the bark away and scraping off the resin like sold underneath. This gum was used medicinally as well as for chewing gum.

Trees & Plants

American Holly



Description

Ilex opaca

American Holly is a medium sized evergreen tree which can reach heights between 33 and 66 feet tall and 20 inches in diameter. The evergreen fruiting branches from the American Holly are popular Christmas decorations. Many improved varieties are grown for ornament, shade and hedges. The sexes of hollies are separate with only the female trees producing red berries. Many wildlife feed upon these berries.

Trees & Plants

Silver Maple

Description

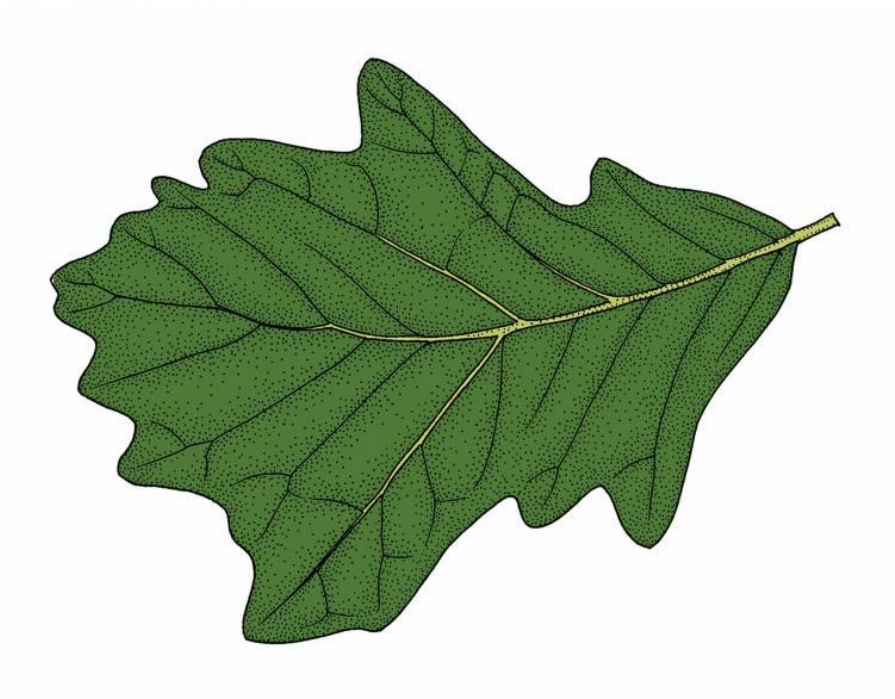
Acer saccharinum

a.k.a. River Maple, Silverleaf Maple, Swamp Maple, Water Maple, White Maple

Silver Maple is a medium to large tree, growing upwards of 60 to 80 feet in height and 2 to 3 feet in diameter. Most Silver Maples develop an interesting ring of curled up bark around the base of the tree about 6 inches above the ground. Silver Maple logs are harvested and sold along with Red Maple as Soft Maple.

Trees & Plants

White Oak



Description

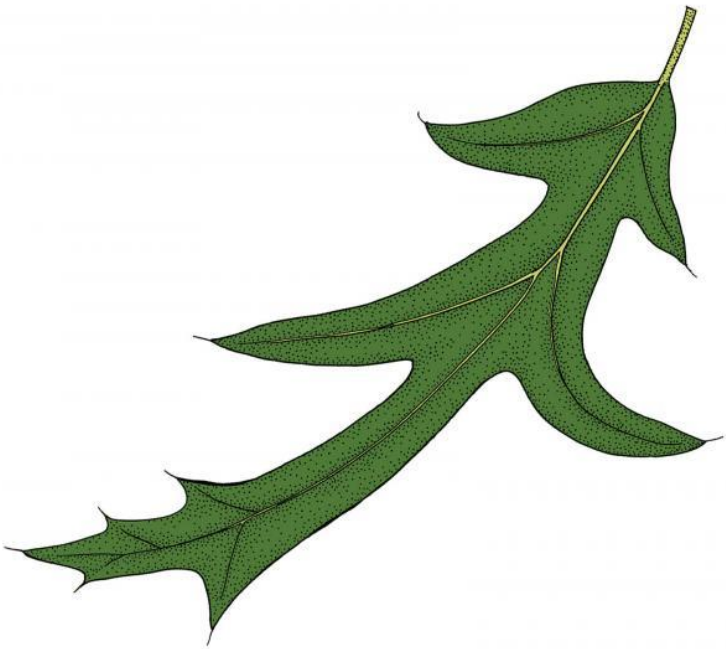
Quercus alba

a.k.a. Eastern White Oak, Stave Oak, Forked-leaf White Oak

White Oaks are often among the largest trees in the eastern forest. Given time, these long-lived trees have the potential to reach heights of 150 feet in height and 4 feet in diameter. White Oak trees have some of the lightest colored bark in the forest, typically very light grey. White Oaks are also one of the most commercially prized trees in the forest due to the fact that the pores of the wood are sealed making it hard, tough, and incredibly strong.

Trees & Plants

Southern Red Oak



Description

Quercus falcata

a.k.a. Spanish Oak, Water Oak, Red Oak

Southern Red Oak is a medium size tree usually growing 50 to 80 feet in height and 1 to 1½ feet in diameter. Southern Red Oak is marketed as Red Oak and is used for many wood products. It has the nick-name of “Spanish Oak” because it commonly occurs in areas of early Spanish colonies.

Trees & Plants

Pignut Hickory

Description

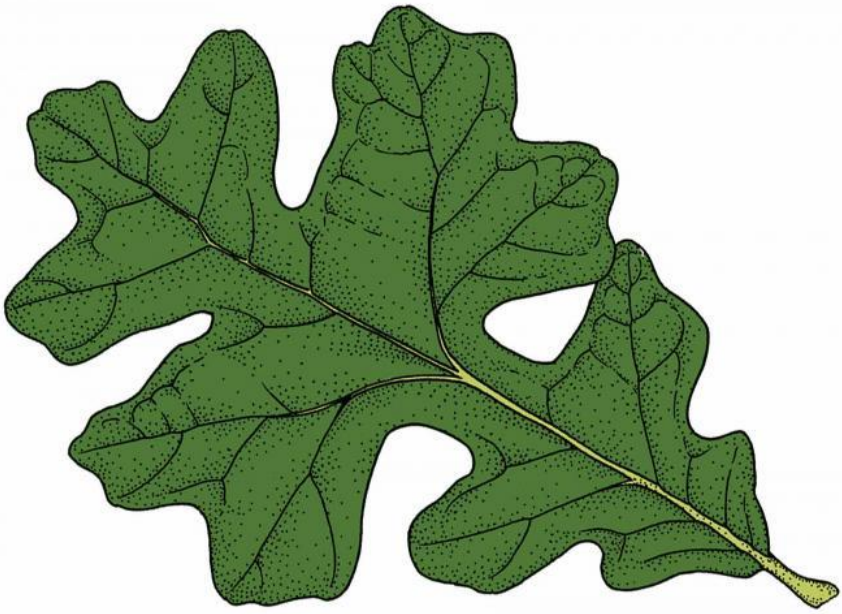
Carya glabra

a.k.a. Broom Hickory, Coast Pignut Hickory, Pignut, Smoothbark Hickory, Swamp Hickory

Pignut Hickory often grows to heights of 80 to 90 feet but can occasionally reach 120 feet. Diameters can be between 3 to 4 feet. Pignut Hickory is commercially harvested and sold as Hickory. It is used for many products that require tough, flexible wood such as tool handles. Pignut Hickories are often found in urban settings because of its ability to live through the abuses of building construction.

Trees & Plants

Post Oak



Description

Quercus stellata

a.k.a Box White Oak, Iron Oak

Post Oak is a clow-growing, small tree that seldom reaches more than 40 feet tall and 1 to 2 feet in diameter. Post Oak is very drought resistant so it can grow on dry, poor soils. The wood is marketed commercially as White Oak.

Nature Zone # 3

As you walk along these stretch of pines after you pass the Post Oak you may notice that some of the trees at the base of the trunk look as if they had been burned. This is absolutely true! Fire is regularly used all over the world to keep forest healthy. Fire helps to remove low-growing underbrush so that sunlight can reach the soil and increase the nutrients in the soil. The larger trees benefit from this because they no longer have to compete with the understory shrubs for nutrients and they can grow larger and healthier.

Nature Zone # 3 Cont.

Some species of trees and plants are actually fire dependent. They must have fire every 3-25 years in order for their seeds to be released and new plants and trees to take their place over the years.

Trees & Plants

Loblolly Pine

Description

Pinus taeda

a.k.a. Arkansas Pine, North Carolina Pine, Oldfield Pine

Loblolly Pine can reach proportions, maturing at heights of 80 to 100 feet and 2 to 4 feet in diameter. Loblolly Pine has been genetically improved for the fast, uniform growth needed for the commercial plantation production of pulpwood and sawlogs. Its fast growth and strong root system also make it a favorite pine for ornamental planting.

Trees & Plants

Shortleaf Pine

Description

Pinus echinata

a.k.a. Shortleaf Yellow Pine, Southern Yellow Pine, Oldfield Pine, Shortstraw Pine, Arkansas Soft Pine

Shortleaf Pine can reach heights of 80 to 100 feet tall and 1 to 3 feet in diameter. Shortleaf Pine does well on abandoned fields and exhausted farmlands. It is relatively fast growing and its wood is harder and stronger that the Loblolly Pine and therefore has a wider range of uses. If you look closely at the bark you will see many small pits which are an aid in identifying this tree.