



# The Trees of WWPP

Welcome to the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park! The 10 species in this fact sheet are just a sample of the many trees that inhabit WWPP. It includes species that are rare, as well as some more common species you are likely to encounter, and it will help you identify them, locate them, and understand why they are important. For more detailed information or other species' brochures, please visit our website at [www.wiltonpreserve.org](http://www.wiltonpreserve.org) and click on the Education tab.

Our mission is to conserve ecological systems and natural settings, while providing opportunities for environmental education and recreational experiences. The WWPP represents a partnership between the Town of Wilton, Saratoga County, The Nature Conservancy, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

## 1. Pitch Pine (*Pinus rigida*)

**Description:** Stiff, twisted yellow-green needles, 2"-5" long, in bundles of 3. Needle clusters may grow directly from trunk. Branches irregular and sparse. Cones 1"-3" long, egg-shaped with flat bottom and sharp-tipped scales. Bark gray, thick, scaly, with deep irregular ridges. Height 40'-60'.

**Habitat/Location:** Sandy or rocky soils in dry, open areas; found at Old Gick Farm and Camp Saratoga.

**Importance:** Sparse branches allow sunlight to reach plants important to the Karner Blue Butterfly like Wild Blue Lupine. Very resistant to fire; can re-sprout from stumps. Some pitch pines produce cones that open and spread seeds only when heated by fire. Birds and squirrels feed on seeds.



Keith Kanoff, forestryimages.org Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission



## 2. Northern Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*)

**Description:** Leaves dull green, turning dark red in fall; 7 to 11 shallow, curvy lobes with



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pointed tips. Large tree with thick, spreading branches. Bark rough with long, vertical ridges (sometimes reddish between gray stripes). Acorns egg-shaped, 5/8"-1 1/8" long, with shallow, flattened cup. Height 70'-90'.

**Habitat/Location:** Common forest species, tolerant of sandy, rocky soils as well as moist, loamy areas. Found at most WWPP preserves, especially Old Gick Farm and Camp Saratoga.

**Importance:** Cold hardy and grows more rapidly than other oak species. Acorns provide food for animals and birds. Compatible with Pitch Pine, it's a preferred species at WWPP.



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## 3. Paper Birch (*Betula papyrifera*)

**Description:** Leaves dull green, turning yellow in fall; oval with rounded base, pointed tip, and small, pointed teeth around the edge. Narrow tree with thin, drooping branches and reddish twigs. Bark bright or chalky white, thin and mostly smooth, peeling into papery strips. Height 50'-70'.

**Habitat/Location:** Prefers moist but sunny areas. Found at Camp Saratoga and other forested parcels.



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**Importance:** Fast-growing, short-lived species, usually one of the first to grow in a forest. Seeds provide food for birds like ruffed grouse; deer eat twigs.

## 4. Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*)

**Description:** Leaves shiny dark green, turning yellow to orange in fall, oblong and with pointed tip, edged with very fine teeth. Bark dark grey-black with small, flakey scales, and reddish underneath.

Young trees have dark purple, smooth, shiny bark and short, pale, horizontal lines (lenticles). Makes clusters of very small, round, dark red-black fruits in summer. Height 60'-80'

**Habitat/Location:** Prefers moist (not wet), sunny areas, but tolerates dryer soils as well. Found at Camp Saratoga and Old Gick Farm.

**Importance:** Bitter fruit is important food source for many birds and animals, including raccoons, foxes, deer, and squirrels.



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## 5. Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*)

**Description:** Leaves up to 12" long, blue-green, with 6 to 20 egg-shaped leaflets in pairs along leaf stem and one leaflet at tip. Thick, short thorns in pairs along branches. Bark light grey, thick, forming long, deep, crisscrossing ridges. Produces flat, narrow pods with bean-like seeds in fall. Height 40'-80'.

**Habitat/Location:** Open fields and woodlands with moist or dry, sandy soils. Found at Fox parcel.

**Importance:** *NYS Invasive Species*. Fast-growing, spreads easily, and can crowd out native plant species. Seeds are eaten by birds and animals.



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## 6. Eastern White Pine (*Pinus strobus*)

**Description:** Dark blue-green, soft needles, 2"-5" long, in bundles of 5. Bark dark gray, smooth when young then becoming thick, rough, and blocky. Cones 4"-8" long, narrow and tapering. Height 80'-110'.

**Habitat/Location:** Prefers dry, open areas. Found at all WWPP sites, especially Camp Saratoga and Old Gick Farm.

**Importance:** Branches grow from the top, one set each year branching out from center like wheel spokes. Fast-growing in open areas and can crowd or shade out native Pitch Pines.



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## 7. Scrub Oak (*Quercus ilicifolia*)

**Description:** Leaves smaller than other oaks; dark, dull green on top, pale and hairy underneath, turning yellow to red in fall, and 5-7 very shallow lobes, each with slightly pointed tip. Bark thin, smooth to slightly scaly, dark gray. Acorns egg-shaped, with dark brown stripes, and deep, bowl-shaped caps. Height 20' or less, often shrub-like.

**Habitat/Location:** Prefers dry, sandy areas and slopes. Found at Camp Saratoga and Old Gick Farm.

**Importance:** A frequent companion of Pitch Pine habitats. Also called "Bear Oak," this small, shrubby tree provides bitter acorns eaten by some animals, particularly a favorite of black bears.



Will Cook, www.duke.edu/~cwcook/trees

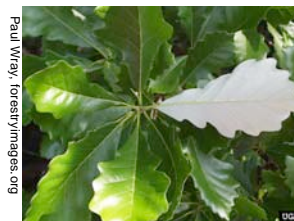


## 8. Swamp White Oak (*Quercus bicolor*)

**Description:** Leaves shiny green on top, pale underneath, with 5-10 very shallow, wavy round lobes; widest near the top and narrow at stem end. Leaves turn reddish brown in fall. Bark light gray, scaly, with long, deep, vertical ridges. Acorns on long stalks, egg-shaped, with more than 1/3 of acorn inside bowl-shaped cap. Height 60'-70'.

**Habitat/Location:** Prefers wet soils, along streams and in swampy forests. Found mostly at Neilmann parcel.

**Importance:** Acorns provide food for animals and birds in wet forests.



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## 9. White Oak (*Quercus alba*)

**Description:** Bright green leaves with 7-11 moderately deep lobes, evenly distributed with round ends. Leaves turn red, then brown in fall, sometimes staying attached to twigs. Bark light gray, with shallow cracks and scales. Acorns oval with short, slightly flattened cap. Height 80'-100'.

**Habitat/Location:** Prefers moist but well-drained forests. Found at most WWPP parcels, including Camp Saratoga and Old Gick Farm.

**Importance:** Squirrels, turkeys, and other animals feed on acorns. Oaks are slow-growing and compatible with Pitch Pines.



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## 10. Bigtooth Aspen (*Populus grandidentata*)

**Description:** Leaves rounded, tapering to a point, with coarse, regularly spaced teeth; very long, flat stems.

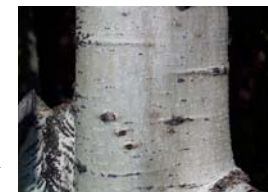
Dull green, turning yellow in fall. Bark mostly smooth, gray-yellow or greenish-white on young trees and upper branches of mature trees. Older trees have thick, dark gray bark with vertical ridges. Height 30'-60'.

**Habitat/Location:** May be found in dry soils and open sites, or moist floodplains. Found throughout WWPP, especially at Old Gick Farm and Camp Saratoga.

**Importance:** Grows rapidly and spreads easily with stems that emerge from the roots of established trees. One of the first to grow after fires or disturbance, but is short-lived and soon replaced by other tree species.



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