

Forest Health Extension Notes



Ash Tree Identification

Fraxinus species

Ash trees are deciduous trees found naturally regenerating in woodlands, open areas and along our roadways. They are often planted along city streets and in parks, as they are tolerant of the stresses of an urban environment. There are 5 species of Ash found in Norfolk County: White Ash, Green Ash, and Black Ash are the most common, and Blue Ash and Pumpkin Ash are rare.

Branch and Bud Arrangement



Fig. 1 Ash tree branch.¹



Fig. 2 Ash tree buds.²

Ash is one of a few species to have opposite branching and bud arrangement. To determine if your tree is an Ash, look at the way the branches are arranged. Ash tree branches and buds are opposite, directly across from one another. Please bear in mind that branches and buds may die, and not every branch will have an opposite partner.

Leaves



Fig. 3 Ash leaf—7 leaflets.³



Fig. 4 Ash leaf—9 leaflets.⁴

Leaves are compound, where one leaf is composed of several individual leaflets. Ash leaves can contain 5-11 leaflets, depending on the species.

Bark



Fig. 5 Bark of a mature Ash.⁵

Mature Ash trees have distinct diamond-shaped ridges to the bark. Bark on young ash trees is relatively smooth, and ridges develop as the tree increases in age.

Seeds



Fig. 6 Ash seeds and leaves.⁶



Fig. 7 Ash seeds.⁷

The fruit or seeds of an ash tree are known as samaras. Ash samaras are 1-2 inches in length, are oar-shaped and hang in clusters.

Photo Sources:

- ¹ Image courtesy of MSU Extension.
- ² Image courtesy of Ohio DNR.
- ³ Image courtesy of MSU Extension.
- ⁴ Image courtesy of MSU Extension.
- ⁵ Image courtesy of Northern Country Morels.
- ⁶ Image courtesy of Division of Forestry—Kentucky.
- ⁷ Image courtesy of Ohio DNR.



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