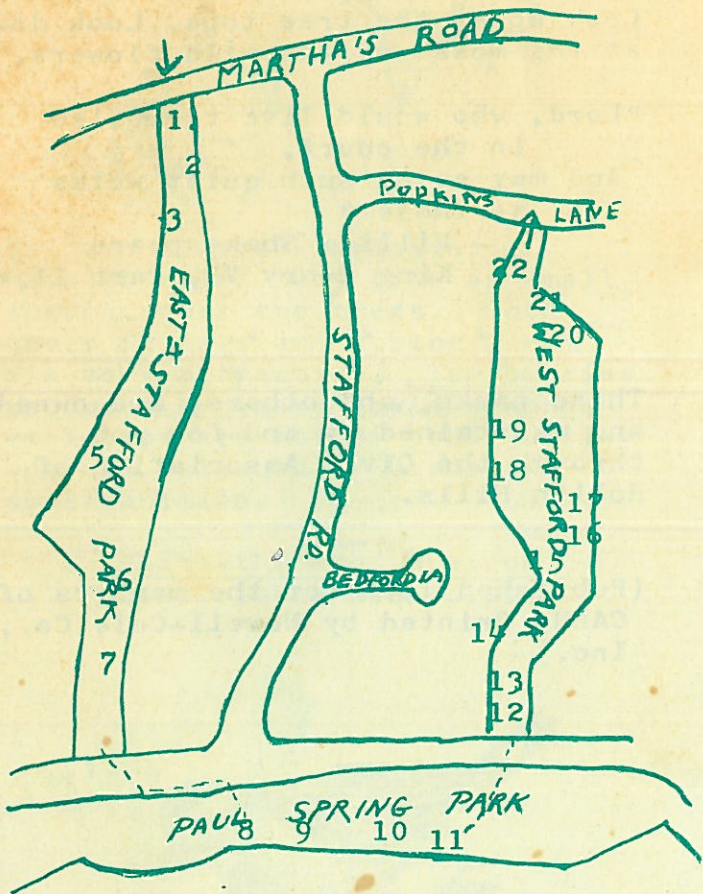


HOLLIN
HILLS
PARK TRAIL



EAST STAFFORD PARK

1. Huckleberry Bush *Vaccinium* sp.



We have several varieties of huckleberries that grow as small shrubs under the trees. Both their foliage and spring bloom are very attractive. The berries produced by these lowland woods varieties are not of good quality but are relished by birds and small animals.

White-throated Sparrow *Zonotrichia albicollis*



This booklet is your guide to the numbered trees down East Stafford Park, across part of Paul Spring Park, and up West Stafford Park. It also identifies some of the birds you may see.

This trail has been developed so that you can enjoy serene and beautiful walks, and to offer you a closer acquaintance with the world of nature. It is hoped that the trail will entice you to walk more often and more leisurely. Listen to the birds in the thickets. Look up at the tree tops. Look down at the moss and the wild flowers.

"Lord, who would live turmoiled
in the court,
And may enjoy such quiet walks
as these?"

- William Shakespeare
King Henry VI, Part II, x.

* * *

These parks, and others, are owned and maintained by and for you through the Civic Association of Hollin Hills.

(Published 1966 for the members of CAHH. Printed by Newell-Cole Co., Inc.)

These little sparrows are seen fall, winter, and spring in our woods scratching in the leaves and calling in easily imitated whistles that sound rather like poor Sam Peabody Peabody Peabody. They have black and white striped crowns, a white throat, and an unspotted breast with a streaked brown back.

2. Black Oak
Quercus velutina

The black oak grows throughout Virginia and occurs, too, in our parks. It closely resembles red oak and can be mistaken for pin oak or scarlet oak. The bright yellow color and bitter taste of its inner bark distinguish it from red oak. It grows to be a large tree with an irregularly shaped crown.

The leaves are dark green and shiny on the upper surface, pale on the lower. The acorn is light brown with a yellow and extremely bitter kernel.



GH

3. Mulberry
Morus rubra

The easiest way to tell a mulberry tree is by its large coarse-toothed pointed leaves. The fruit resembles a blackberry and is eagerly eaten by birds. They, in turn, account for young mulberry seedlings in unexpected places.



FRUIT
LE

Bobwhite
Colinus virginianus



The call of the bobwhite is distinctive and persistent. The bird is named for its call. Northerners call him quail, while Southerners refer to him as the partridge; but he has named himself, and ornithologists have decided that he is the prior authority.

The bobwhite is a small, chunky, reddish-brown bird, with a distinctive head pattern and grayish tail. It averages ten inches in length and seven ounces in weight. They may be heard and sometimes seen behind the Hollin Hills School, near the Hollin Meadows School, and on Mason Hill where it is more open than in most of our park area.

4. Red Maple
Acer rubrum



GH

The red or swamp maple is a common tree in Hollin Hills. You may have noticed the red maple we have planted around the swimming pool fence. It favors wet soils but grows well nearly anywhere it can get enough sun.

The red maple appears red in spring because of its dense cluster of red flowers and later its fruit. The big tree on Rebecca opposite the intersection with Popkins Lane has unusually brilliant red flowers.

The flowers are followed by winged seeds. Its leaves have three to five pointed saw-toothed lobes.

The light brown wood is used in making furniture and other wood products. Like hard maple it can be tapped in the spring to produce maple sirup. This particular tree with the bumpy effect on its trunk would produce a "curly maple" finish if made into furniture wood. This and the "birds eye" effect in maple occur only in certain trees.

5. Bitternut Hickory
Carya cordiformis



Most of the hickory in this area is bitternut hickory. It has compound leaves with seven to eleven leaflets. The nut ripens in October and is almost round and enclosed in a thin scaly bark.

The bitternut hickory has a brown, very bitter kernel which gives this tree its name. The wood is hard, strong, and very tough. Hickory is used in axe and other tool handles, hoops, and vehicle parts. It is regarded as the best of all fire woods, and the "hickory smoke" produced by this and other green hickory wood and bark are prized for smoking hams and other meat and some cheeses. It can be distinguished from other hickories by its bright yellow winter buds and by bark that becomes broken with age into close flat ridges which never become shaggy.

6. Blackjack Oak
Quercus marilandica

The blackjack oak is the smallest of the dozen species of oaks that grow in this vicinity.

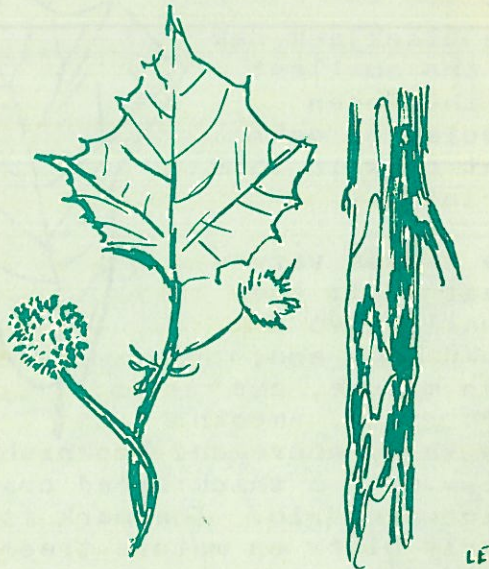
The leaves vary a great deal; they usually have a broad apex and, when mature, are dark green, smooth and shiny above, and brownish hairy below with a thick broad orange-colored midrib. The bark is nearly black on mature trees and divided by fissures into plates. The acorn is in a rather deep cup so only about half of it shows.



7. Sycamore
Platanus occidentalis

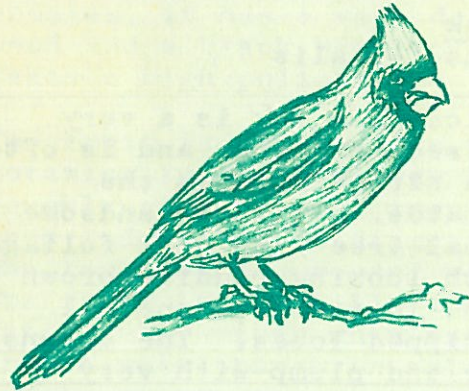
The sycamore is very easy to identify because of the black and white spotted effect of its bark, its very large leathery leaves which are often broader than long, and its single buttonball fruits on slender stems. We have several of these trees in the parks and quite a few have been planted in yards.

The wood has interwoven fibers that make it difficult to split. This quality makes it in demand for butcher's blocks, saddletrees, cigar boxes, and even musical instruments. In colonial days sycamore provided almost ready-made wheels for oxwheels by simply cutting blocks from a sycamore log and cutting a hole in the center for the axle.



Cardinal
Richmondena cardinalis

The Cardinal is our state bird. The male is bright red with a large crest and a black face which helps distinguish him from the summer tanager. Cardinals frequent feeding stations where they seem partial to sunflower seeds which the male can sometimes be seen feeding to his brownish mate. They remain paired throughout the year and are nonmigratory birds.



PAUL SPRING PARK

8. Red Gum
Liquidambar styraciflua

The red gum or sweet gum is very prevalent in this area. Like several other American trees, it is a highly distinctive species. It has a cousin in Mexico, one in central China, and a third in Asia Minor, but no near relatives.

It can be recognized by its glossy star-shaped five to seven lobed leaf, by the pronounced corky ridges on the bark of its twigs, and by the seed balls with a devil club look.



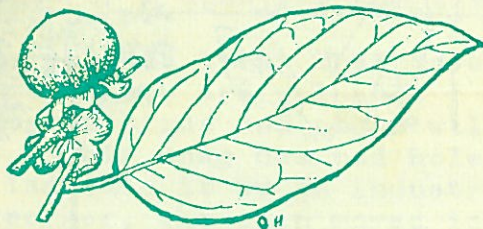
9. Red Oak
Quercus borealis

The American red oak is a very popular tree in Europe and is often used as a street tree in the United States. It is a handsome symmetrical tree with dark foliage and smooth looking reddish-brown bark. The leaves have unequal bristle-tipped lobes. The acorns are large and plump with very shallow cups.

The wood is used for a wide variety of purposes and is second only to white oak in commercial value. It grows more rapidly than any of our other oaks. This is, of course, a special virtue in a tree for street and forest planting.



10. Persimmon
Diospyros virginiana



The persimmon is our only northern member of the ebony family. Like the tropical ebonies, it has a very dense wood and a black heartwood that takes a high polish.

The fruit is distinctive. Botanically it is a true berry, roughly globular, an inch to an inch and a half in diameter, with one to eight compressed seeds. The fruit is unusually astringent until fully ripe, when it changes from a pale orange in color to a deep orange or even purple. The pulp has then a delicious flavor.

The leaves are alternate, pointedly oval, and a deep glossy green with pale undersides. The bark is nearly black, divided into small neat blocks like a rough mosaic.



GRAY SQUIRREL TRACKS

G.H.



11. Sassafras
Sassafras albidum

CH

The sassafras is one of our most interesting trees. The leaves are distinctive: some occur in a simple lance shape; others are like a mitten with either a right or left thumb, and some are three-lobed. Often all three can be found on a small branch.

In colonial days the supposed medicinal value of the roots and bark made sassafras one of the chief exports. Though no longer used directly as medicine, oil of sassafras is still used to perfume soaps and to flavor soft drinks and medicine.

It is a very old species. Its ancestors inhabited much of the northern hemisphere in early geologic times. This species and a close cousin in China are the only modern day descendents. Male and female blooms are borne on separate trees so only female trees bear fruit.



RABBIT TRACKS



OPOSSUM TRACKS

CH

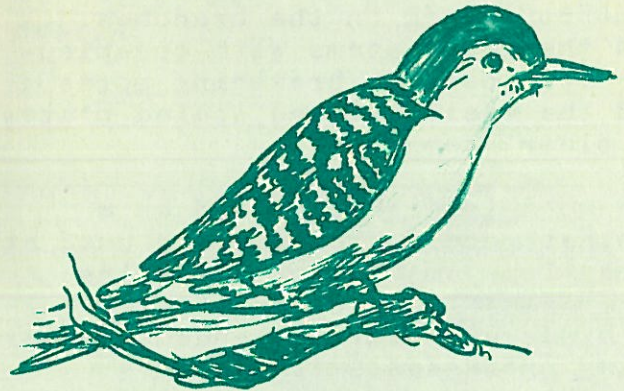
WEST STAFFORD PARK

12. Woodpecker hollows at the top of a dead red gum tree.

Snags and old trees that have become hollow are valuable assets to birds and other wild life. This snag has had holes drilled into it by an industrious woodpecker, who then moved in and set up housekeeping. It is sure to have other tenants so long as the snag remains standing.

Red-bellied Woodpecker
Centurus carolinus

These woodpeckers are about robin size and are seen in the woods all over the South.



Sometimes they come to feeding stations but nest in dead tree tops. They have scarlet heads and black and white ladder backs with no red on their bellies at all. The red-bellied is noisy, often repeating a single cherr several times. Unlike other woodpeckers, the red-bellied eats more vegetable matter than insects.

13. Black Cherry
Prunus serotina

The black cherry is a familiar inhabitant of Hollin Hills. It is another distinctive American forest tree.



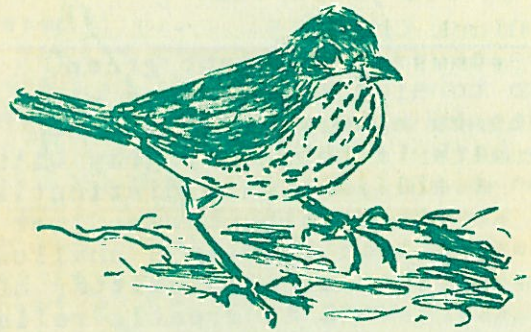
It has a number of characteristics which give it distinction: the dark green oval or lance-shaped leaves with reddish markings on the stems, the four to six inch drooping clusters of beautiful white flowers, followed by pea-sized cherries, the satin smooth red-brown bark on the branches, and the young stems with conspicuous lenticels or breathing pores and the easily peeled scaled plates on older stems.

The wood is highly prized as a cabinet wood. The fruit is used at times for jam and for flavoring beverages; it is eaten eagerly by birds as nature intended. After being processed by the bird's digestive tract, the seed is ready to germinate and does so in great numbers wherever birds congregate.



RACCOON TRACKS

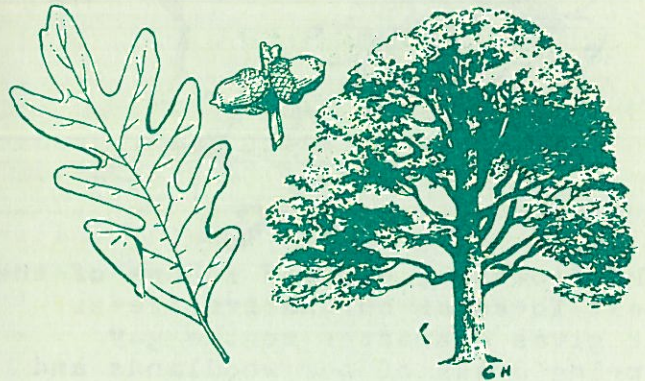
GN



Wood Thrush
Hylocichla mustelina

The wood thrush is smaller than a robin though in the same family. The white breast and sides have dark round spots while his back is brown and his head is rusty. He nests here in our woods and may be heard singing his lovely flute-like phrases, ee-o-lay ee-o-lay, usually near dawn and dusk.

14. White Oak
Quercus alba



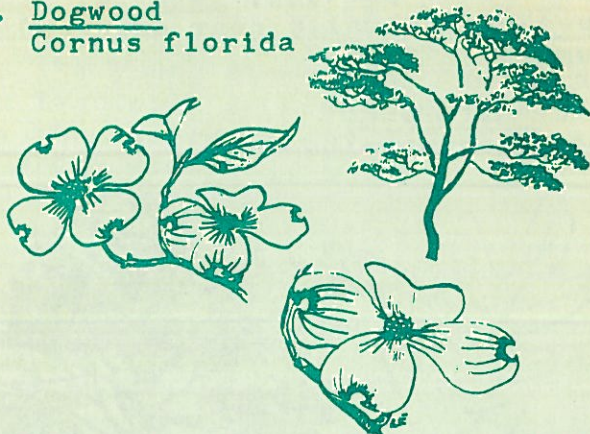
The white oak is regarded as chief of all the oaks and outstanding among trees as well. Though somewhat slow growing it is long lived. Individuals have been known to be 800 years old. We have many fine specimens in the park. The oldest are probably

150 to 200 years old.

The leaves are bright green, five to nine inches long with seven to nine rounded lobes. The bark is thin ashy gray with thin scales; this is distinctive. The acorn is shiny brown, just under an inch long in a shallow cup. It is the least bitter of our acorns and is greatly relished by both mammals and birds.

White oak has been used in ships of the United States Navy from the celebrated frigate Constitution to the mine sweepers of World War II. Once used for blockhouses and barns, white oak is now used for casks and flooring. It is the state tree of Maryland.

15. Dogwood
Cornus florida



The flowering dogwood is one of the best loved of our native trees. It gives character to the gay spring dress of our woodlands and suburbs, both as a wildling and as a carefully cultivated ornamental throughout northern Virginia. Quite appropriately it is the Virginia state flower.

It is a small tree with bright green ovate leaves with sharply

tapered tips. The true flowers are yellow green in a dense cluster in the center of what is usually regarded as the blossom. They are surrounded by four large deeply notched bracts. These are white, pinkish, or, rarely, rose red. Other distinctive characteristics are its opposite branching, its very dark alligator-patterned back, its late season cluster of scarlet berries, and its fall dress of scarlet or purple leaves.

The wood of dogwood has special qualities, too. It is used commercially for the manufacture of shuttles, for textile weaving, and other specialties such as golf club heads.

16. Mayapple

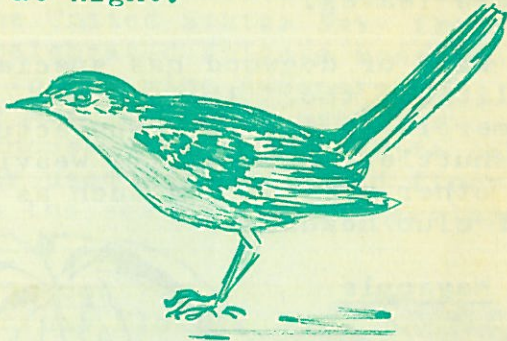
This is often the first wild woods plant children learn to recognize. It is an old favorite with its waxy white flower, its umbrella-like leaf, and its yellow pulpy fruit which is edible. In early days it was used in making wild jelly.



I frequently tramped eight or ten miles through deepest snow to keep an appointment with a beech-tree, or a yellow birch, or an old acquaintance among the pines. Henry David Thoreau
Walden. Winter Visitors

Mockingbird
Mimus polyglottos

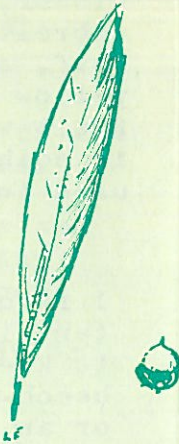
The mocker is a slender grey and white bird about robin size with a long tail and white wing and tail patches that are visible when he flies. He repeats notes or phrases six or more times before going on to the next one. They may copy the songs of many other birds in the course of singing. In the summer they are heard singing at night.



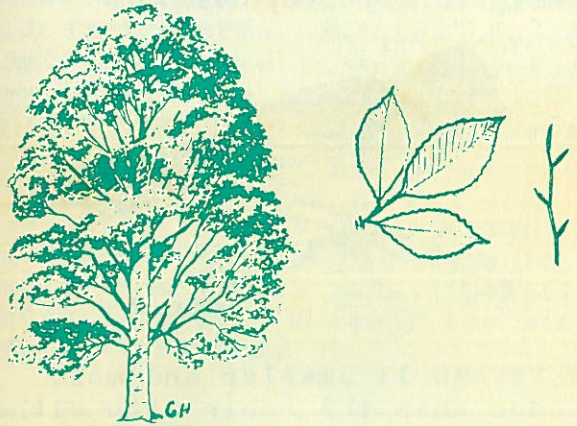
17. Willow Oak
Quercus phellos

The leaf of the willow oak, also known as the peach leaf oak, is distinctive among the dozen kinds of oak we have in the park.

Its leaves are long and narrow, more like those of a willow than an oak, but they are glossy and more leathery as befits an oak tree. The acorns are small, about a half inch long with shallow cups. This oak does not have much commercial value but is such a fast growing handsome tree that it has high value for street and ornamental planting.



18. Beech
Fagus grandifolia



The beech is an exceptionally fine ornamental tree with its smooth gray bark so noticeable in winter and its dense crown of shiny dark green foliage. We have only a few of these trees in the parks but some very fine specimens along lower Rebecca Drive.

The glossy, blue green, straight-veined leaves are three to five inches long with serrated edges and with a vein terminating in each tooth. Buds are long and tapering and add to the distinctive appearance.

The fruit consists of small short-stalked burs which ripen in October and which contain two or three triangular, highly polished, brown, sweet-meated, edible nuts. These are highly relished by many animals and birds, and by small boys, too.

Eastern Towhee
Pipilo erythrophthalmus



The towhee is smaller and more slender than the robin with either a black or dark brown back with a white breast and rufous sides. He eats insects that he finds beneath leaves on the ground where he may be seen vigorously scratching up dry leaves. He breeds in brushy places and is usually found near the ground. His call is che-wink or drink your tee. The towhee is more common in the summer.

19. Holly (American)
Ilex opaca

Our American holly is native here. Its dark green shiny leaves and red berries are strongly associated with Christmas. This is a tradition that came from England. Even further back in time, holly had religious significance.



The spiny-toothed leaves are thick, leathery, and firm. They are shiny green above and yellow green below. They remain on the tree three years.

Male and female flowers are produced by separate trees and only the female tree produces berries. The flowers are inconspicuous; they have four petals and are white. The red or yellow berries develop in early fall and remain on the tree over winter. They are attractive to birds which distribute the hard nutlets in new areas. The bird's digestive process serves to ready the seed for germination.

20. Tulip Tree
Liriodendron tulipifera



SH

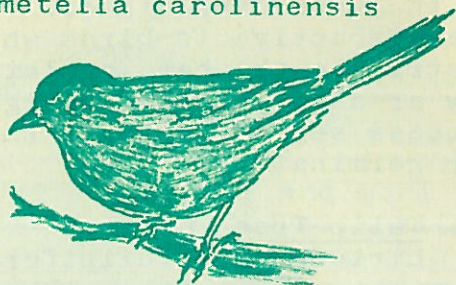
The tulip tree is often called yellow poplar though it is not related to the poplars. It belongs to the magnolia family and is of ancient origin with many of its close relatives showing up in fossil remains in Europe and Asia.

Its leaf is distinctive. It is large, light yellow-green, clean cut, truncate or ending abruptly as if cut off. The large greenish-yellow and orange tulip-like flowers develop into dry cone-like seed heads about three inches long.

The tulip tree is one of the largest and fastest growing trees of the east and has high commer-

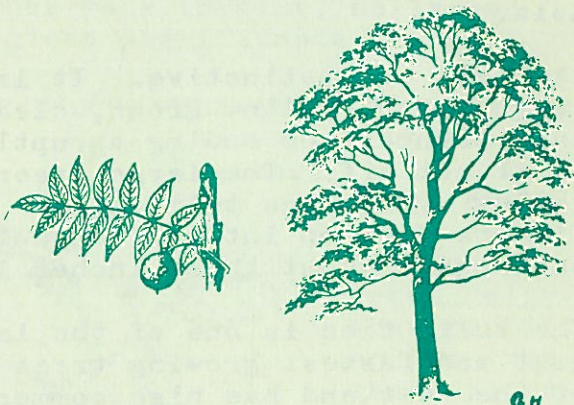
cial value. For that reason it has been removed repeatedly from local woodlands until few remain. Fortunately, we have several fine specimens in our parks.

Catbird
Dumetella carolinensis



The catbird is smaller and slimmer than the robin. He is slate gray with a black cap and rusty covert under the tail. They make a cat-like mewling noise at intruders while the notes of their songs echo other birds but do not repeat them like the mocker. They nest in thickets and are usually seen rather close to the ground. The catbird is a common visitor to our woods in the summer and may occasionally winter through.

21. Walnut tree entwined in poison ivy. *Juglans nigra* entwined in *Rhus radicans*.



The eastern black walnut is well known for its wood and for its nut. The wood has traditionally been used for gun stocks and for cabinet work of all kinds. The nut kernel has a distinctive flavor not lost in cooking and is much used by confectioners and ice cream makers. The leaves of the walnut are compound and very long with fifteen to twenty-three lance-shaped leaflets. The fruits consist of a pulpy hull surrounding a single nut. The nut is nearly black with a hard deeply-grooved shell.

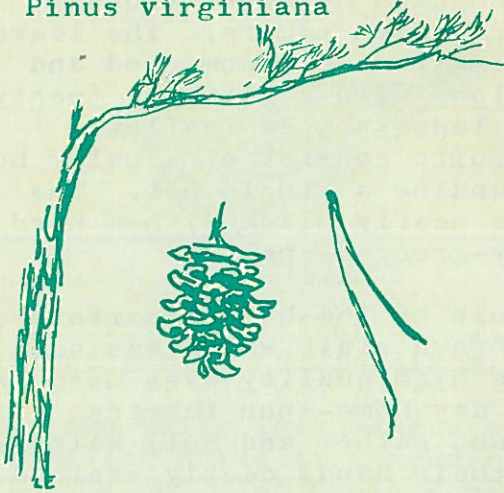
The pulp of the hull imparts a rich brown stain which was one of the high quality dyes used in early day home-spun fabrics. Boys who gather and hull walnuts find their hands deeply stained for weeks.

Poison ivy or poison oak is one of our most common natives. It has a shiny three-lobed leaf and grows both as a low shrub and as a high climbing vine. The buds and leaves exude a very toxic oil that causes skin irritation to many who come in contact with it. People who are highly susceptible may suffer poison ivy irritation without touching it because the oil is volative in hot weather.



Poison ivy produces a white waxy berry that remains on the vine over winter. It is eagerly eaten by birds. They redistribute it into new areas.

22. Virginia Pine
Pinus virginiana



Virginia pine is a familiar tree in this area. It is well named though it is prevalent also along the New Jersey coast and southward along the Appalachians to Alabama. In Virginia it is at its best; in New Jersey it is a "scrub." Some call it "old field" pine since most of the pine stands come in on abandoned farm lands.

Its twisted grayish-green needles are usually in pairs. The cones are reddish brown growing tight to the parent stem. The purplish waxy bloom in the spring distinguishes this pine from other two-needle pines.

It grows rapidly on good soil but grows also on soils too poor to support other vegetation. It has become valuable as pulp wood and as a cover on eroding lands. It is an attractive ornamental where it has full sun.

White-breasted Nuthatch
Sitta carolinensis

Nuthatches are the "upside-down birds" that move over tree trunks and branches searching for insects and insect eggs. They like suet and sunflower seeds and will visit feeding stations.

The nuthatch is a small bird with a black head, white face and breast, gray back, black and white wings. They stay paired through the year and may be heard calling yank yank at each other.



I once had a sparrow alight upon my shoulder for a moment while I was hoeing in a village garden, and I felt that I was more distinguished by the circumstance than I should have been by any epaulet I could have worn.

Henry David Thoreau
Walden. Winter Visitors

In our parks there are a great many trees, shrubs, and wild flowers which have not been mentioned in this booklet. Below is a partial list. Can you find others?

Trees not described:

- Black locust
- Pin oak
- Southern red oak
- Tupelo or red gum
- Willow
- Ironwood or blue beech
- Silver maple
- Hackberry
- Elm
- Redbud
- Cottonwood
- Virginia juniper

Shrubs

- Wild rose
- Snow berry
- Honeysuckle
- Green briar
- Wild blackberry
- Laurel
- Wild pivot
- Wild barberry
- Virginia creeper



Black Gum,
Sour Gum (Tupelo)

Wild Flowers

- Bluets
- Stargrass
- Buttercups
- Crowfoot
- Wild dandelion
- Mallow
- Joe pie weed
- Cinquefoil

Ferns, moss, mushrooms.

The Civic Association of Hollin Hills is extremely grateful to:

Arthur A. Brown for his selection of the trees and the detailed description of each;

Lillian Eleazer for her delicate drawings of the birds and some of the trees;

the staff of Gunston Hall for being an unending source of advice, for allowing the Association to use some of the drawings from its Barn Wharf Trail booklet, and for being an inspiration to develop a nature trail for Hollin Hills;

Barbara Sutherland for her descriptions of the birds.