

Select Trees and Plants of the LBA Woods

Compiled by Theodore Thomas, MSc.

Evergreen/Coniferous Trees

Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) Fast-growing tree up to 100-250 feet tall, tallest trees greater than 300 feet tall. Identified by its straight trunk and corky, brown bark, which becomes deeply furrowed on older trees. Many individual trees may live >1,000 years, while the oldest trees in LBA are shy of 100 years. Needles are flat, spirally arranged like a bottle brush; they leave a flat scar on the twig. Prefers full sun to partial shade, but thrives in full sun. The thick bark protects them in moderate fires. Ethnobotany: Pitch used to make salve for wounds or skin irritations.

Wood widely used for tools, home construction, etc.

Western redcedar (*Thuja plicata*) Grows more than 200 feet tall with big, tapering trunk (3-10 ft. diameter). Can live up to 1,000 years. Needles are flat, overlapping like scales, shiny bright-green above, paler on the underside. Bark is thin, shaggy, reddish, and easily peels off into long strips. Small, half-inch cones are near the ends of the branches, bluish-green when young, becoming brown. Trees host butterfly caterpillars of the cedar hairstreak. Prefers moist or swampy soils. Does well in full sun to shade. Despite shallow roots, it is windfirm except on wet sites. Ethnobotany: Widely used by native tribes for everything from canoes to clothing; every part of tree was used.

Western Hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*) Our state tree. Grows up to 225 feet tall. Graceful, drooping branches and furrowed, dark-brown to reddish-brown bark. Needles on the same branch vary in size from 1/4- to 3/4-inch long, form flat sprays; distinctly grooved, glossy green above. Does best in moist, well-drained soils. Often seen growing from rotted logs (nurse logs) rich in nutrients. Lives up to 600 plus years. Full sun to full shade; seedlings can become established in shade. One of our most shade-tolerant species. Ethnobotany: Pitch used as liniment for chest colds; bark makes a dye.

Noble fir (*Abies procera*) Planted trees, mature specimens are found in Trillium. Up to 280 feet tall, and greater than 8 feet diameter. Symmetrical, conical crown. Needles distinguished by two rows of stomates on top and bottom surface, and grooved on upper surface. Classic Cascades mountain tree of mid-elevation on wet, well drained slopes, also known from Willapa Hills, WA and Oregon Coast range. Fine white wood used for ladders, venetian blinds, favored as a Christmas tree.

Evergreen hardwoods

Pacific Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*) A gangly, tree up to 90 feet tall. Distinguished by chartreuse colored bark at young stage, and deep brownish-red with exfoliating bark at maturity. Leaves alternate, leathery and shiny.

Deciduous Trees

Big-leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*) Grows 60-100 feet tall with broad, spreading crown. Palmate, opposite branching and leaves; leaves up to a foot across. Full sun to part shade, usually found in moist, well-drained soils; never in fine, saturated soils. Mature trees usually covered with moss and licorice ferns. Ethnobotany: Young tree shoots peeled and eaten; bark was boiled for a tea to fight tuberculosis.

Vine Maple (*Acer circinatum*) Found in LBA Park proper. A small tree of the understory, beautiful fall color. As with all maples, ash and dogwood it has opposite branching. Wood is desirable for food smoking.

Paper birch (*Betula papyrifera* var. *subcordata*) A small patch of birch trees are found in Trillium. A medium sized, fast growing deciduous tree, also known as white birch, canoe birch, or silver birch. Grows on well drained, sandy loam soils. An important browse plant for many wildlife species. The wood is used in veneer, and pulpwood.

Red alder (*Alnus rubra*) Mature trees are 30 to 120 feet tall, and one to three feet in diameter. Alternate branching, leaves up 4 inches long, broad and elliptic with pointed ends; margins are course, with serrations. Bark on older trees generally covered by lichens, giving it a white appearance; new bark is olive green or reddish. Clusters of male catkins are borne at the ends of the branches; appear in fall and drop off after pollination in early spring. Seeds persist in cone-like structures — in early fall one can see ripe green “cones”. Found in disturbed sites, riparian areas; grows in a variety of soils, full sun to partial shade. Fixes atmospheric nitrogen in the soil. Lives 60-90 years. Ethnobotany: Wood is used for making fine carvings, and furniture. Bark makes an orange dye.

Cascara (*Frangula (Rhamnus) purshiana*) Slender tree, up to 35 feet tall, with egg-shaped/oblong, alternate leaves, deeply veined. Inconspicuous flowers followed by small clusters of berries, red or yellow, ripening to black. Berries attractive and eaten by birds. Found in moist, well-drained soils, full sun to full shade. Sensitive to pollution. Ethnobotany: Bark used to make laxatives ; can be toxic if used to excess; bark also makes green dye.

Pacific crabapple (*Malus fusca*) Up to 40 feet tall as a tree, or smaller as a thicket-forming shrub. Note thorn-like spurs on the stems. Leaves are alternate, egg-shaped, sometimes with a “mitten” shape, sometimes without. Flowers are clusters of small white apple blossoms. Small fruits follow, varying in color from yellow to red. Found in moist sites near streams or wetlands, full sun to part shade. Ethnobotany: Crabapples, though tart, were an important food & can be stored with minimal preservation.

Willows — Sitka, or Scouler’s (*Salix spp.*) There are several species of willow found locally, and often hard to tell apart, except for in the spring when their large catkins hold the keys to identification. Leaves alternate, often narrowly oval or lance shaped. Leaf margins are smooth. On Sitka willow, there are silvery, silky hairs below. Willows range from medium-sized trees (40-60 feet tall) to small, shrub-like trees. Many species are found near stream or pond edges, but the Scouler willow generally grows in upland, dry conditions.

Deciduous Shrubs

Beaked hazel (*Corylus cornuta*) Grows up to 20 feet tall. Forms dense, arching clumps. Leaves alternate, oval, 2-4 inches across, covered with fuzzy hairs. Male catkins appear in early fall and drop off after pollination, in March-April. Tiny female flowers appear in early March, then become filbert nuts. Moist, well-drained to dry soils; intolerant of saturated soil, full sun to full shade. Ethnobotany: Nuts eaten all winter; long flexible shoots twisted into ropes.

Oceanspray (*Holodiscus discolor*) Erect shrub up to 15 feet. Leaves alternate, oval, 3/4 to 2 1/2 inches, with shallow lobes or teeth. Profuse flowers, in cascading clusters, creamy white, provide nectar source for butterflies. Clusters of small brown, star-shaped seeds persist into winter. Found on well-drained, dry sites, full sun to full shade. Ethnobotany: Hard wood used for bows, spears, harpoons, and pegs for construction.

Red-osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*) Grows up to 20 feet, but usually a shorter shrub. Leaves are opposite, 2-6 inches long, egg-shaped or elliptical, pointed. Twigs are often bright green, yellow, or red, especially in winter. White flowers appear in flat-topped clusters at the ends of branches, then become bluish-white fruit clusters. Found in moist soils near water, full sun to part shade. Ethnobotany: Branches were used for basket rims, salmon spreaders, medicine.

Serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*) Multi-stemmed tree/shrub, usually 10-12 feet tall. Oval leaves, serrated on top-half and smooth below. White flowers in showy clusters. Fruits become dark purple when ripe. Moist to dry areas, well-drained soils, full sun to part shade. Ethnobotany: Berries can be dried and stored for winter to be used in seasoning, sweetening meats and soup.

Red elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*) Leggy shrub up to 20 feet tall. Opposite, pinnately compound leaves. Creamy-white flowers in pyramidal-shaped clusters, become bright-red berry clusters. Found in moist to dry soils, full sun to part shade. Ethnobotany: Red berries may cause nausea, especially if eaten in quantity; contain cyanide-producing glycosides; cooked berries can be strained to eliminate seeds and then made into jelly or wine. Wood used for fishing lures and temporary arrows.

Osoberry/Indian Plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*) Grows 5-16 feet tall. Narrow, pinnate leaves, bright green, turn yellow early. First shrub to flower in spring —usually in late February. Male and female flowers on separate plants (dioecious), so only females produce “plums.” Found on moist to dry sites, stream banks and open woodlands, full sun to part shade, but prefers some shade. Ethnobotany: Berries eaten fresh, dried, or cooked; bark used as a tea to restore health.

Spirea/Hardhack (*Spiraea douglasii*) Wetland species that grows 7-10 feet tall. Leaves are alternate, up to 3 inches long, oblong with a rounded tip. Leaf margins are serrated along the top part. Flowers are borne in dense, elongated mauve-pink clusters at the ends of stems; the distinctive, brown seed heads remain throughout winter. Tolerates wet to dry soils, full sun to part shade. Can create dense thickets in marshy soils. Ethnobotany: Seeds used to make a tea to treat diarrhea.

Salmonberry (*Rubus spectabilis*) Grows 3-10 feet tall on prickly, shredding orange-hued stems. Alternately arranged leaves contain 3 leaflets. Large magenta flowers bloom in early March, providing nectar to hummingbirds. Orange or red berries ripen in late spring. Prefers moist soils, but will tolerate drier soils if in shade; grows full sun to full shade, depending on moisture in soils. Ethnobotany: Berries and early-spring shoots are edible and delicious; leaves and bark were made into medicines for burns and toothaches.

Thimbleberry (*Rubus parviflorus*) Grows 3-10 feet tall on cane-like stems with shredding, brown bark. Big, fuzzy palmate leaves in alternate arrangement. Only *Rubus* without prickles. Large white flowers attract butterflies. Red raspberry-like fruit eaten by humans and birds. Found in dry to moist, well-drained soils, full sun to partial shade. Ethnobotany: Berries and early-spring shoots were eaten by native tribes: Berries were eaten fresh when ripe.

Red huckleberry (*Vaccinium parvifolium*) Grows 4-10 feet tall, often out of stumps or rotting logs. Strongly-angled bright green branches. Small, smooth-margined alternate leaves and tiny pink bell-shaped flowers. Small red berries are tart but delicious. Dry to slightly moist soils with lots of organic matter. Partial to full shade required. Ethnobotany: Fruits used for fish bait and mouthwash. Leaves used for sorethroat medicine.

Bald-hip rose (*Rosa gymnocarpa*) Delicate shrub grows 6-8 feet tall. Small, alternate compound leaves with 5, 7, or 9 leaflets per leaf. Bright red or pink flowers bloom in spring and attract hummingbirds and butterflies. Small, bright-red, pear-shaped fruits contain vitamin C and last through winter. Fuzzy, spinelike prickles on the stem, profuse at the base. Dry to moist soils; very drought-tolerant. Requires partial shade. Ethnobotany: Leaves and twigs made into nutritious tea; other parts used to make medicine for sore eyes.

Common snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*) Low-growing shrub, 2-6 feet, with small opposite leaves, very slender branches. Dense system of rhizomes is excellent for erosion control. Small pinkish white, bell-shaped flowers, followed by big white berries that persist through winter — more berries in sunnier sites. Dry to wet sites, full sun to shade. Ethnobotany: Berries cause nausea if eaten in quantity (foul-tasting); can be mixed with water to make soap.

Trailing blackberry, dewberry (*Rubus ursinus*) Trailing shrub, often climbs on other vegetation. Delicious, sweet berry. Our only native blackberry.

Evergreen Shrubs

Evergreen huckleberry (*Vaccinium ovatum*) Dark, blue seedy berry at maturity. 4 – 6 feet, evergreen shrub, with leathery, alternate, serrated leaves. Wet to dry sites with well drained soils.

Low Oregon-grape/Long-leaved Oregon-grape (*Berberis* or *Mahonia nervosa*) Low evergreen shrub, two to (rarely) three feet tall. Alternate, pinnately compound prickly (holly-like) leaves, with 9-19 leaflets per leaf. Three central veins, vs. one in tall Oregon-grape. Bright yellow flowers and blue fruits. Found on moist to dry soils, part to full shade. Ethnobotany: Tart berries eaten or made into jam; shredded bark used to make bright-yellow dye; root contain secondary compounds used for immune-boosting tinctures.

Tall Oregon Grape (*Berberis*, or *Mahonia aquifolium*) Medium sized, up to 8 feet tall shrub. Alternate, branching with compound leaves having 7 or less leaflets. Bright yellow, showy flowers with blue fruit at maturity.

Salal (*Gaultheria shallon*) Thicket-forming broad-leaved evergreen shrub, 3-7 feet tall. Alternate, thick, leathery leaves, small urn-like flowers, black berries. Prefers dry or raised areas in forests. Part to full shade; slow to establish and spread. Ethnobotany: Berries eaten or crushed to make dye; leaves chewed to relieve sore throats and indigestion. Berries mixed with other fruits make good jam.

Ferns

Sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*)

Lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*)

Deer fern (*Blechnum spicant*)

Licorice fern (*Polypodium glycyrrhiza*)

Bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*)

Selected Herbaceous Plants

Pearly everlasting (*Anaphalis margaritacea*)

Pacific bleeding heart (*Dicentra formosa*)

False lily-of-the-valley (*Maianthemum dilatatum*)

Columbia, or Tiger lily (*Lillium columbianum*)

Star-flowered Solomon's seal (*Smilacina stellata*, or *Maianthemum stellatum*)

Western trillium (*Trillium ovatum*)

Fireweed (*Epilobium angustifolium*)

Evergreen violet (*Viola sempevirens*)

Yellow violet (*Viola glabella*)

Western trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera ciliosa*)

Starry solomonplume (*Smilacina stellata*)

Siberian miner's lettuce (*Claytonia* or *Montia sibirica*)

Pacific waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum tenipes*)

Inside-out flower/Duck's foot (*Vancouveria hexandra*)

Northern starwort (*Stellaria calycantha*)

Bedstraw/cleavers (*Galium aparine*)

Sweet cicely (*Osmorhiza chilensis*)

Cow-parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*)

Cooley's Hedge Nettle (*Stachys cooleyae*)

Self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*)

Youth-on-Age/Piggy-Back Plant (*Tolmiea menziesii*)

Foam flower (*Tiarella trifoliata*)

Starflower (*Trientalis latifolia*)

Large-leaved avens (*Geum macrophyllum*)

Spotted Coral root (*Corallorhiza maculata*)

Enchanter's-nightshade (*Circaea alpina*)

Small-fruited woodrush (*Luzula parviflora*)

Dewey's Sedge (*Carex deweyana*)

Henderson's Sedge (*Carex hendersonii*)

Nodding Trisetum (*Trisetum cernuum*)

Unwanted, alien, or nonnative plants

One seeded hawthorn (*Cretagus monogyna*)

Common foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*)

Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*)

Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)

European nightshade/bittersweet (*Solanum dulcamara*)

Holly (*Ilex spp.*)

Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus discolor*)

Evergreen blackberry (*Rubus laciniatus*)

Saint John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*)

Scot's broom (*Cytisus scoparius*)

Orchard grass (*Dactylis glomerata*)

Velvet grass (*Holcus lanatus*)

Groundsel (*Senecia jacobea*)

Common Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*)

Cherry trees (usually a hybrid of our native *Prunus emarginata*)

Stinking bob (*Geranium robertianum*)

Theodore Thomas works as a local scientist. He has degree(s) in forestry, with a huge emphasis on botany, insect biodiversity, systematics, wildlife management and ecology.

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