

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

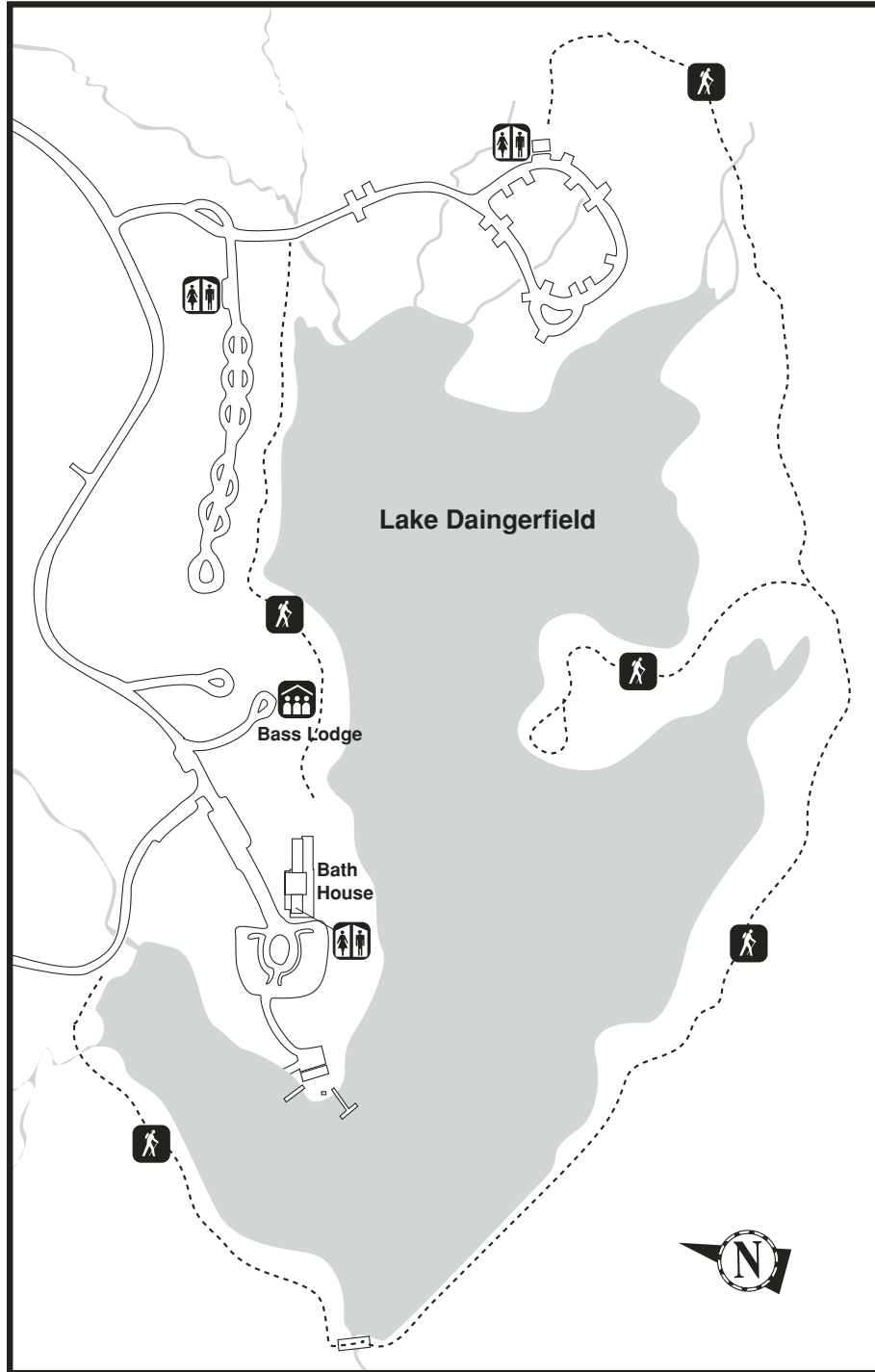


# **RUSTLING LEAVES**

NATURE TRAIL

Daingerfield State Park

# RUSTLING LEAVES NATURE TRAIL



## Welcome to Daingerfield State Park!

Located in the western half of the Cypress Creek Drainage Basin, this 501-acre park is rich in natural and cultural resources. Diverse wildlife, desirable climate and rich soils contributed to settlement of the area during both prehistoric and historic periods.

Prehistoric sites in the area include the remains from PaleoIndian (12,000 BC-6,000 BC), Archaic (6,000 BC-200 BC), Woodland (200 BC-AD 800) and Caddoan (AD 800-1,600) settlements. In 1542, the Moscoso expedition, part of the DeSoto command, passed through the area. Nearly 200 years later, the French established a trading post and immigrants began to settle the area. During the Civil War, the area developed into an iron industrial center, with factories producing guns and other items. Sawmills, woodworking plants and cotton mills were established in the vicinity, leading to a depletion of the local forests before World War II.

Original construction of the park was by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a group created by President Roosevelt during the Great Depression to combat the dual issues of unemployment and the preservation of natural resources. From 1935 to 1938, when the park opened to the public, CCC companies constructed an earthen dam to impound the 80-acre lake, built scenic roads and assembled buildings from local stone and timber.

Daingerfield State Park is in the mixed pine-hardwood forest of East Texas and boasts a variety of wildlife and plant species. This 2 1/2-mile hiking trail around the spring-fed lake provides visitors with opportunities to see the large pileated woodpecker and several other bird species. Also keep an eye out for squirrel, fox, armadillo, opossum, rabbits, deer, beaver and the many different reptile species found within the park.

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Plant illustrations from *Trees, Shrubs and Woody Vines of the Southwest* by Robert A. Vines with drawings by Sarah Kahlden Arendale, 1960, University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas.

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## I. RIVER BIRCH

*Betula nigra*

OTHER NAMES: Red Birch, Black Birch

This tree can grow to 90 feet high, with dull, reddish brown bark peeling off in curly, thin flakes. The leaves are simple or lobed with double serrations. The flowers are clustered 1 to 3 1/2 inches long. The cylindrical fruit, about 1 1/2 inches in length, ripens in April through June.



## 2. WATER OAK

*Quercus nigra*

OTHER NAMES: Possum Oak, Spotted Oak, Duck Oak, Punk Oak



Water oak grows rapidly and attains heights of almost 100 feet. It occurs in swamps, low flats, and stream banks, and is a part of a complex consisting of the willow, water and laurel oaks. It is a widely planted tree and in its most typical form, has dark green, spoon-shaped leaves that vary from completely deciduous to almost totally evergreen. Its bark is dark grey, smooth when young but becoming broken into irregular ridges as the tree matures.

### 3. AMERICAN HOLLY

*Ilex opaca*

OTHER NAMES: Holly, White Holly

The largest native holly, this tree grows to 70 feet high and thrives in moist soil and river bottoms. This holly has heavy, spiny evergreen leaves and smooth grey bark. Male and female flowers are on separate trees, and bright red berries are only present on female trees. Mostly used as an ornamental tree or shrub, American holly wood is especially suited for inlays in cabinetwork, handles, carvings, and rulers. Many kinds of birds and mammals eat the bitter berries.



### 4. SOUTHERN RED OAK

*Quercus falcata*



OTHER NAMES:  
Spanish Oak, Swamp Red Oak

A common oak of open woods, red oak is one of the largest oaks, growing to heights of 80 feet, and has dark brown bark tinged with red. Its acorns are eaten by several wild animals, and the wood, which is heavy, hard, strong and close-grained, is used to build houses and furniture. Red oak commonly occurs in areas of early Spanish colonies but is unlike any oaks native to Spain.



## 5. YAUPON

*Ilex vomitoria*

OTHER NAMES: Cassena, Christmas-berry

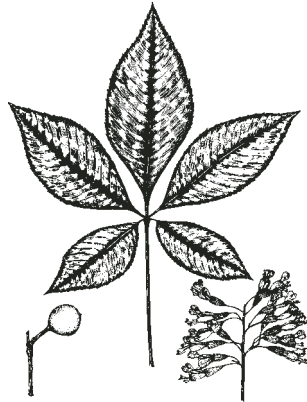
A close relative of the American holly, yaupon is a small tree, growing to 20 to 25 feet high on the rich bottomlands of East Texas. The leaves are 1 to 2 inches long. Male and female flowers are borne on separate plants. The fruit, a scarlet, berry-like drupe, is produced in great abundance by the female plant. Often used as ornamental shrubs, the leaves of the yaupon contain caffeine which American Indians used to prepare a tea to induce vomiting and as a laxative.

## 6. RED BUCKEYE

*Aesculus pavia*

OTHER NAMES: Scarlet Buckeye, Firecracker Plant

Red buckeye is a hybrid small tree, often planted for its bright red flowers. The large, attractive fruit is inedible. The white spot on the leathery brown nut gives the buckeye its name. Compound leaves grow opposite on thick twigs, but the leaflets radiate out like the fingers of your hand. Native Americans threw the powdered seeds and branches into pools to stupefy fish for easy capture. Pioneers also used the gummy roots of the buckeye as a soap substitute and made home remedies from the bitter bark.

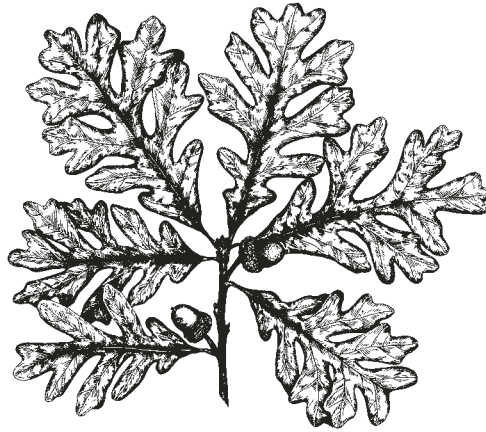


## 7. WHITE OAK

*Quercus alba*

OTHER NAMES: Stave Oak

This is the best known of the oaks, and its beauty attracted the attention of early colonists. In open places, white oak develops a broad symmetrical crown. Its scaly bark is light grey and its leaves have 5 to 9 rounded lobes. It is used for lumber, furniture, boats and barrels for whiskey and other liquids. White oak grows to about 120 feet and can live for 600 years.



## 8. AMERICAN HORNBEAM

*Carpinus caroliniana*

OTHER NAMES: Bluebeech, Ironwood, Waterbeech

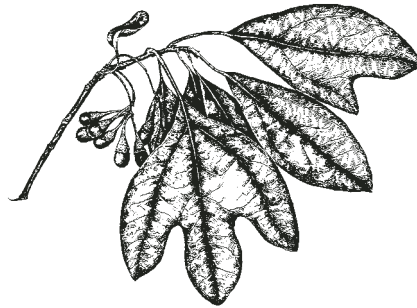


The American hornbeam is a small tree, rarely growing to more than 40 feet. It is recognized by its thin, bluish-grey bark covering a trunk which is fluted into muscle-like swellings. It prefers moist soil. The fruit is a part of the diets of songbirds and quail. The tough, hard wood is used for handles, wedges and the like. Deer browse the twigs and foliage.

## 9. SASSAFRAS

*Sassafras albidum*

OTHER NAMES: Green Stick

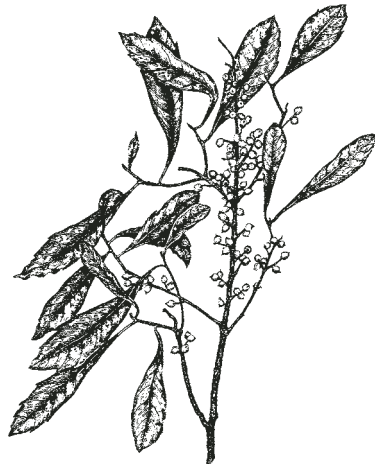


Sassafras is characterized by its bright-green twigs, yellow-green flowers and lustrous blue fruit borne on bright-red pedicels. Peculiar, mitten-shaped, three-lobed leaves, entire leaves and one-lobed leaves are present on the same tree. First used by Native Americans, the aromatic twigs can be chewed, and the roots and bark supply oil of sassafras, used to make tea and perfume soap. Explorers and colonists thought the root bark was a panacea, or cure-all, and shipped quantities to Europe. Sassafras grows to about 60 feet high.

## 10. SOUTHERN WAXMYRTLE

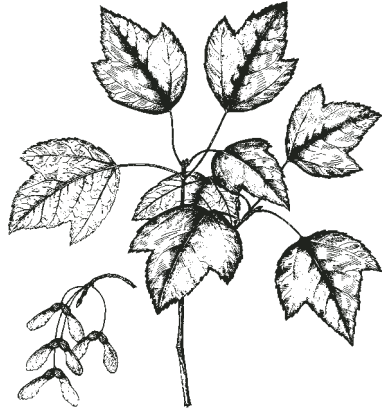
*Myrica cerifera*

OTHER NAMES: Candle-berry



Southern waxmyrtle is an evergreen found in thickets. It can grow to 30 feet high and wide, but averages around 8 feet. The leaves are toothed and abruptly pointed at the end. The tree is very aromatic, and small, blue, wax-coated berries grow up and down the stems of the female plants. These berries contain a whitish wax that the early settlers used for making candles and as a source of honey, a custom still followed in some countries.





## 11. RED MAPLE

*Acer rubrum*

OTHER NAMES:

Scarlet Maple, Swamp Maple

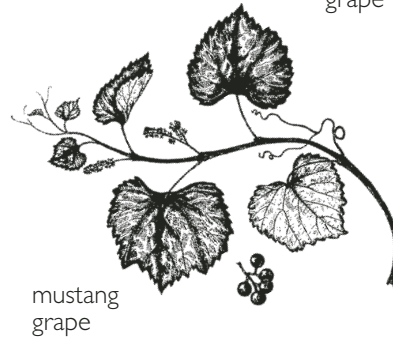
Red maple is a widespread tree of swamps, riverbanks and moist hill slopes that grows to 90 feet high. Winged fruit, called a samara, ripens in late spring. Red maple, a handsome shade tree displaying red to deep purple leaves in autumn, has the greatest north-south distribution of all species along the East Coast. Pioneers made ink and brown and black dyes from the bark.

## 12. GRAPEVINE

*Vitis* sp.

OTHER NAMES: Monkey Vine

This is an extremely hard, woody vine that can grow to be as thick as a tree's trunk. Grapes grow in clusters of 6 to 300 berries. The berries may be black, blue, golden, green, purple, red or white, depending on the variety of the plant. The most common wild grapes found in Texas are muscadine grapes and mustang grapes, which grow in small clusters and fall off singly as they ripen. Many of these grapes are grown domestically and can be jellied and made into wine.



### 13. WINGED ELM

*Ulmus alata*

OTHER NAMES: Cork Elm, Wahoo

An Eastern tree, winged elm has corky ridges (wings) on its twigs and branches. It can grow to a height of 80 feet, but is usually much smaller. The leaves are deeply saw-toothed, and the long fruits have single samara-type seeds that mature in early spring. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the fibrous inner bark was made into rope for fastening covers of cotton bales. Wahoo was the Creek Indian name for this elm.

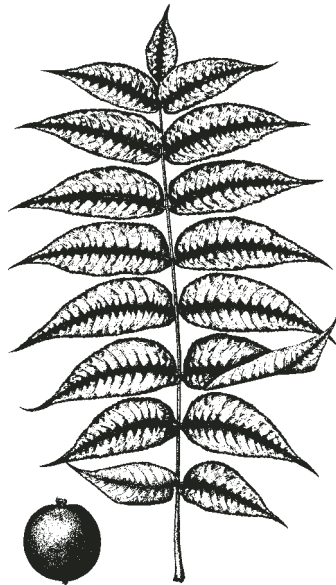


### 14. BLACK WALNUT

*Juglans nigra*

OTHER NAMES: Eastern Black Walnut, American Walnut

This is a large walnut tree that can grow to be 100 feet tall. The large, fragrant leaves have 15 or more finely toothed leaflets, each ending in a long point. The large, round, edible nut grows in a thick green or brown husk. One of the scarcest and most coveted native hardwoods (some prized trees have even been stolen), black walnut is used for furniture, gun stocks and cabinetry. A blackish dye is made from the husks. The delicious nuts are also eaten by squirrels and other wildlife.



## 15. AMERICAN BEAUTY BERRY

*Callicarpa americana*

This shrub, 4 to 9 feet tall and wide, grows in woodlands, moist thickets and bottomlands. The leaves are up to 9 inches long with toothed edges.

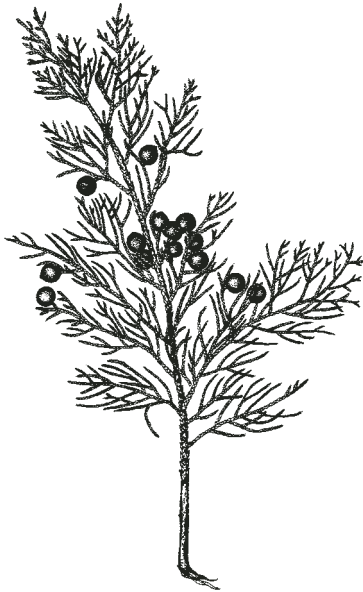
Showy, red to purple berries grow in dense clusters up and down the stems and remain on the plant even after the foliage drops in August through November. The American beauty berry, very pretty when the berries are ripe, is used for ornamental plantings. Deer, livestock and birds all browse this shrub.



## 16. EASTERN RED CEDAR

*Juniperus virginiana*

OTHER NAMES: Red Juniper, Virginia Juniper, Pencil Cedar, Carolina Cedar, Baton Rouge Cedar, Red Savin



Eastern red cedar grows to 70 feet tall in almost any soil type and lives up to 300 years. Dark blue berries, actually this evergreen's cones, are only present on female trees. Wonderfully aromatic red heartwood and white sapwood are used for pencils, chests, closets, shingles and carvings. Fences and furniture are commonly made from the branches, and the tree is grown for Christmas trees and ornamentals. Cedar oil for medicine and perfume is obtained from the wood and leaves. The juicy berries are consumed by many types of wildlife, including the cedar waxwing, a unique bird named for this tree.

## 17. BLACK HICKORY

*Carya texana*

OTHER NAMES: Buckley Hickory



These are medium trees, growing to heights of 40 feet or more. Black hickory is very slow growing with a rough, shaggy bark that is thick and deeply furrowed. The edible fruit, or hickory nut, is encased in a thin, split husk. Its small size makes the wood of minor commercial importance, however, the opening of hickory buds in the spring is a sight worth seeing.

## 18. DEVIL'S WALKING STICK

*Aralia spinosa*

OTHER NAMES:  
Hercules-club, Prickly-ash

Without a doubt, this small, aromatic tree deserves its name! It has no branches when young, but bears huge compound leaves 3 to 4 feet long from the top of its trunk on the ends of twigs and big clusters of tiny, white flowers. Devil's walking stick can reach a height of 30 feet with multiple rings of stout spines along its length. In the autumn, blackish berries mature in clusters. Often planted as a grotesque ornamental in Victorian times, the aromatic, spicy roots and fruit were used by early settlers and Native Americans in home remedies, including a cure for toothaches.





## 19. POST OAK

*Quercus stellata*

OTHER NAMES: Iron Oak, Cross Oak, Branch Oak, Box Oak, Delta Post Oak

This oak is extremely sensitive to change in the soil grade. Even something as simple as paving a road over the roots can kill the tree. The leaves have a very distinctive shape and can be looked at as a cowboy hat sitting on top of a post. The post oak gets its name because it has a high durability when used as a fence post. The wood is also used for railroad crossties, firewood, furniture and lumber. The small acorns are eaten by deer, javelina, feral hogs, squirrel and wild turkey.

## 20. FLOWERING DOGWOOD

*Cornus florida*

OTHER NAMES: Eastern Flowering Dogwood, Dogwood

The showy white appearance of this tree heralds the coming of spring. Leafless branches support numerous large petal-like bracts surrounding the true flowers – small, greenish-yellow structures, inconspicuous among the center of these bracts. Green leaves develop after the flowers have disappeared and turn a bright red in autumn. Scarlet fruit ripen in October providing food for deer, squirrels and many species of birds.



The bark is a dark, reddish-brown, broken into small squares. The wood is used for making skewers, golf club heads, tool handles and charcoal for gun-powder. The hard, heavy wood is extremely shock resistant and also useful for making weaving shuttles, spools, pulleys, mallet heads and jeweler's blocks. Native Americans and early settlers used the aromatic bark and roots as a remedy for malaria and extracted a red dye from the roots.



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