

White oak (*Quercus alba*)



Bark: older trunks grayish-white, long peeling ridges or small blocks, with harmless small white cup fungus; young trunks pale ashy-gray in long strips.

Buds: end buds clustered, small, blunt, reddish-brown, hairless.

Twigs: light gray, smooth; alternate branching.

Habitat: well-drained soils and dry sites.

Uses: wood used for furniture and flooring, wine barrels; provides food for squirrels, birds and other wildlife.

Black oak (*Quercus velutina*)



Bark: larger trunks dark brown-black, thick, deeply grooved broken into small ridges or irregular rectangular blocks; young trunks smooth, dark grayish.

Buds: clustered at ends, narrow, sharp, covered with grayish-silvery hairs.

Twigs: drab brown, hairless, bitter if tasted; alternate branching.

Habitat: dry to medium soils.

Uses: wood used for furniture and firewood; nuts used for food by wildlife.

Deciduous tree walk

Enjoy walking the nature trails at Holy Wisdom and the beauty of the woods in winter. These trees can be found near the kiosk, along the walking trails in the oak woodlands and savanna, and around Lost Lake. Visitors are always welcome for contemplative walks.

About Holy Wisdom

In 1953, the Benedictine sisters first set down roots on this hill overlooking Lake Mendota. Since then, they have built a strong tradition of caring for the earth, rooted in the Benedictine values of stability and respect for all creation. Some of the sisters' first projects caring for the earth included planting trees, many of which are still present today.

We welcome you to explore the trails, prairies and woodlands at Holy Wisdom Monastery and hope you enjoy this oasis of quiet beauty. To learn more, please visit HolyWisdomMonastery.org. Friends are also invited to join volunteer work days and attend environmental education events. If you would like to support our work of caring for the earth, please become a [Friend of Wisdom Prairie](#).

Created by Sylvia Marek & Peter Marshall 1/21



Holy Wisdom Monastery

Weaving prayer, hospitality, justice and care for the earth into a shared way of life

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Deciduous Trees in Winter



Deciduous trees lose all of their leaves and are bare for part of the year. Learning to identify trees in the winter without their leaves means paying attention to the **bark**, **buds** and **twigs**, including **alternate or opposite branching** patterns. But it's not always easy. Feel the bark and look closely at the buds and branching patterns. These native trees can all be found at Holy Wisdom. And are also commonly found all over Wisconsin. How many can you find on your walk today?

Native deciduous trees of Holy Wisdom

White oak	Hackberry
Black oak	Cottonwood
Sugar maple	Shagbark hickory
Silver maple	Black cherry

Shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*)



Bark: older trunks gray, shaggy, peels off in long stripes which curve out-ward; young trunks gray, smooth, striped.

Buds: end or terminal bud brown to grayish brown, large up to one inch, egg-shaped.

Twigs: stout, grey to reddish-brown, smooth, hairless; alternate branching.

Habitat: rich moist soils, well-drained soils, full or partial light.

Uses: wood used for smoke-curing ham, and bacon, good firewood.

Black cherry (*Prunus serotina*)



Bark: older trunks are black and rough, with rounded pieces, like burnt potato chips; young trunks dark gray or reddish brown with short lines or lenticels.

Buds: end buds often clustered, small, dark, pointed, hairless.

Twigs: dark & slender; black knot fungus often on branches; alternate branching.

Habitat: sunny, moist and rich to dry soils.

Uses: fine furniture; fruit eaten by wildlife.

Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*)



Bark: large trunks, gray, small ridges, warty, pebbly, corky, rough or stucco-like; young trunks smooth like beech.

Buds: gray, can be strongly angled to one side, bud scales hairy.

Twigs: brown, hairless or smooth, very slender, zig-zagged, often curve back towards the trunk; alternate branching.

Habitat: rich land along streams, flood plains, uplands, sun to partial shade.

Uses: furniture, boxes; Birds eat the fruit.

Cottonwood (*Populus deltoids*)



Bark: large trunks grayish-brown, deeply furrowed; young trunks yellow-green or gray and smooth.

Buds: yellowish-brown, large, long-pointed, hairless, sticky or gummy.

Twigs: yellowish-green to yellowish-brown, hairless; alternate branching.

Habitat: rich, moist wet areas, dry sites, prefers sun, fast growing.

Uses: low grade lumber, veneer, pulpwood; good source of food for wildlife.

Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*)



Bark: mature trunks gray to brownish-black, large irregular vertical furrows, plates or ridges; young trunks, smooth, ashy-gray.

Buds: brown or grayish-brown, narrow, sharp pointed.

Twigs: reddish-brown or glossy buff, smooth and slender; opposite branching.

Habitat: variety of soils, not too dry or wet, mature upland forests, shade tolerant.

Uses: furniture, flooring, maple syrup, excellent shade tree; food for wildlife.

Silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*)



Bark: larger trunks grayish-brown, furrowed, separates or peels in loose shaggy plates, leaves brown spots; young trunks smooth, gray to pale silvery-gray.

Buds: reddish or greenish, broad, blunt or roundish.

Twigs: reddish, slender, broken twig gives off unpleasant odor; opposite branching.

Habitat: rich soils along riverbanks and flood plains, tolerates partial shade.

Uses: widely planted as a shade tree.