

# MAPLES NEAR YOU

Take a walk in your neighborhood with a grown up, see if you can find a maple tree. Maple trees are deciduous, meaning they lose their leaves each fall and grow new ones in the spring. If the trees don't have leaves when you're out exploring, you'll need to examine the twigs to identify a maple. Maple trees have opposite leaf attachment, meaning the buds on either side of the twig should be directly across from one another (see sketch below). Sugar Maple buds are slender and pointed at the end. There are several species of maples in Minnesota including Sugar Maple, Silver Maple, Norway Maple, Red Maple, Black Maple and Mountain Maple. Sugar maples are ideal for tapping because they have the highest concentration of sugar in their sap (about 2%). If you find a tree with opposite leaf attachment, but bright red buds that aren't as pointy, you might be looking at a Red Maple (see photos below).

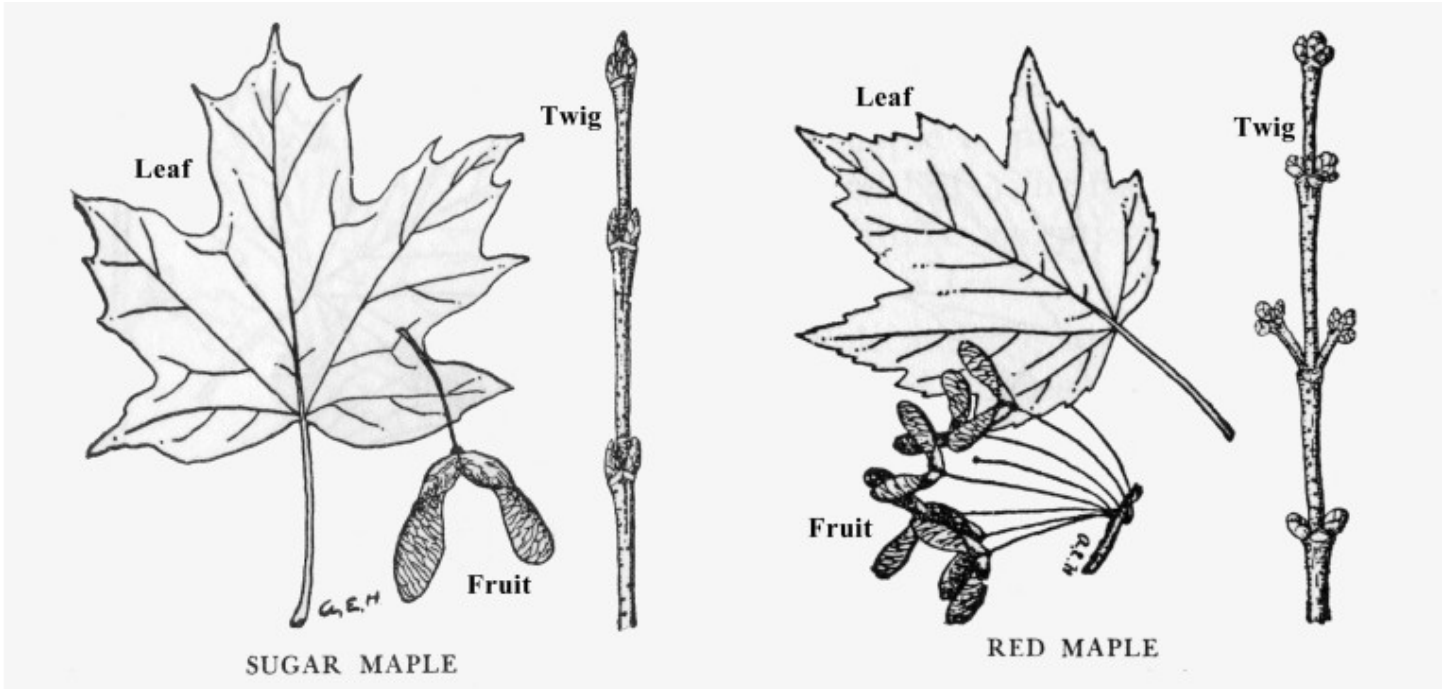


Photo source: <http://bhort.bh.cornell.edu/tree/list.htm>



Photo source: <https://ouroneacrefarm.com/2014/03/14/make-maple-syrup-choosing-trees-getting-sap/>

Once you find a tree (maybe a maple tree, but anything else you can find is just fine too!) complete the following nature journal activities:

1. Take a bark rubbing with paper and crayon.

2. Sketch one of the twigs including buds.

3. If the tree you find is not a maple, write two similarities and two differences between the twigs of the tree you found and the maple twigs.