

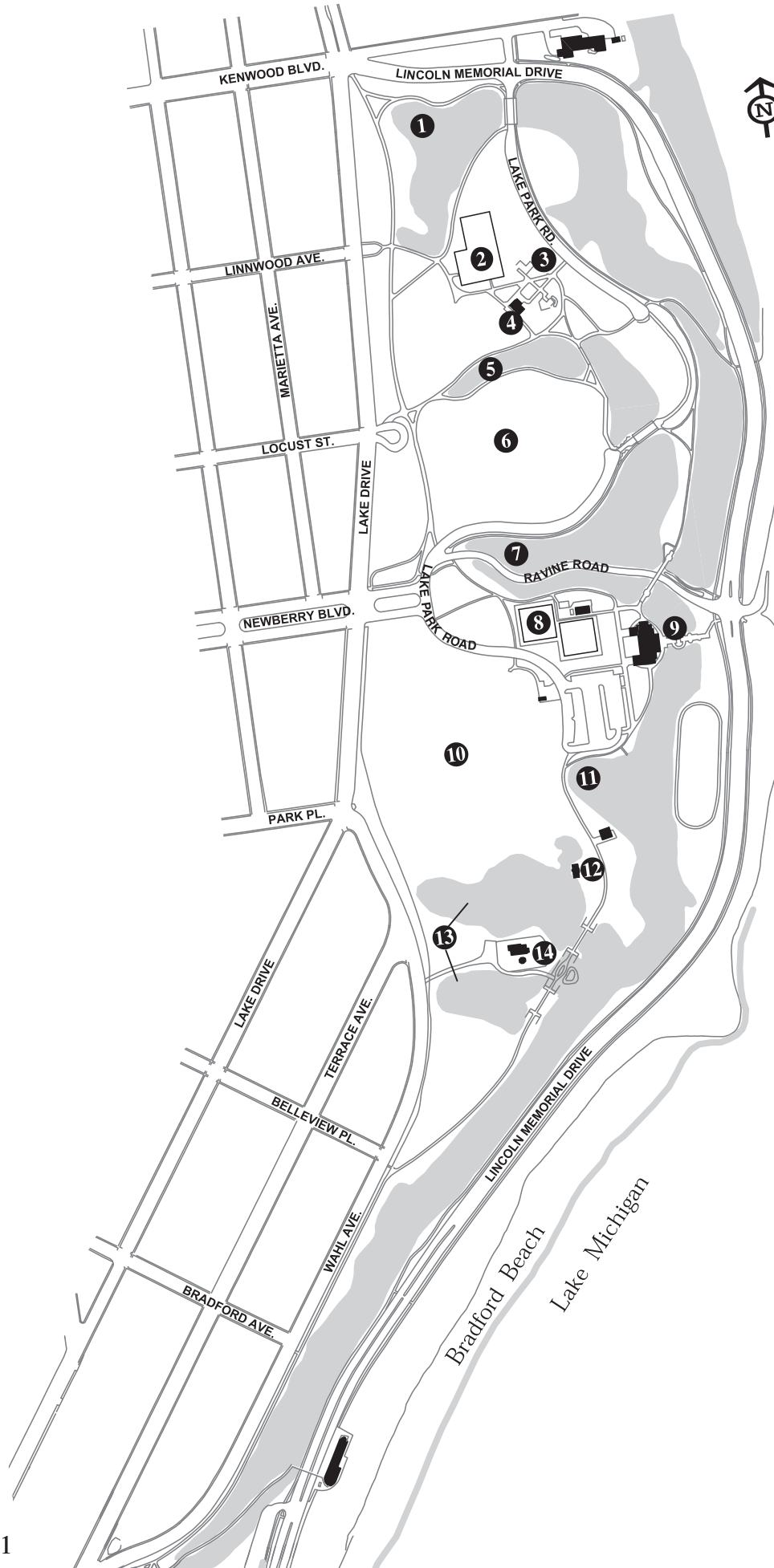
Lake Park Trees



A self-guided walk prepared by

Lake Park Friends

Lake Park



KEY

- 1. North Ravine
- 2. Tennis Courts
- 3. Playground
- 4. Lake Park Friends' Office/Warming House
- 5. Locust Street Ravine
- 6. Indian Mound/Baseball Field
- 7. Ravine Road Ravine
- 8. Lawn Bowling Greens
- 9. Pavilion/Grand Staircase
- 10. Golf Course
- 11. Waterfall Ravine
- 12. Gen. Erastus Wolcott Statue
- 13. Lighthouse Ravines
- 14. Lion Bridges/Lighthouse and Keeper's Quarters

= wooded ravines & bluffs



AN INTRODUCTION TO LAKE PARK TREES

We can roughly distinguish four periods for trees growing in Lake Park:

1.) Native American Times to 1835

Trees estimated to be 180 years or older. In 1835 the first U.S. government survey found the land "well timbered" with native oaks, sugar maple, basswood, beech, hickories, elms, white ash, aspen and ironwood. Long-time inhabitants of the land were Native American Indians.

2.) 1835 - 1890: Settler Times

Trees estimated to be between 120 and 180 years old. In 1835, the land was sold to settlers. A large part of the northern section of what was to become Lake Park was purchased by Gustav Lueddemann in 1849. He built his home here, kept much of the native forest intact, and opened his grounds to the public as a picnic and recreational area. South of there, many of the trees were cut down for timber by other purchasers, many of whom did not reside in Milwaukee.

3.) 1890 - c. 1920: The Building of Lake Park

Trees estimated to be between roughly 100 to 130 years old. In 1889 the City of Milwaukee Board of Park Commissioners, under the presidency of Christian Wahl, established plans to build "Lake Park" and contracted the Frederick Law Olmsted firm to be its designer. They purchased land in 1890. The Olmsted designs included the planting of many native and non-native trees, particularly in those areas where trees had been removed.

4.) 1920 - Present

Trees 100 years old or younger. Some trees are the natural offspring of adjacent trees; some were planted by the City, and after the 1930's, the County Forestry Departments. Whereas many of the trees planted in the early years were non-native, there has been a recognition in recent years that native trees are more desirable. They are adapted to the environment and are less likely to succumb to pathogens. They are also more bird friendly since they provide food and shelter to which the native birds are adapted.

The park can be divided into three general areas:

1.) North Part

Many remnants (and offspring) of the native forest. Some non-natives were planted beginning in 1835, but this area includes the large North Ravine with some of the oldest trees in the park. Major work in the creation of the park was the "screen" of trees and shrubs along its western edge. Begun in the north and planned to extend all the way to the Water Tower, this screen was intended by Olmsted to separate the park from its urban neighborhood and provide a sylvan retreat for park users. Within the park, some trees were removed to create paths and open "meadows" surrounded by groves of trees.



2.) Middle Part

The area of greatest work in the creation of Lake Park (bridges, Pavilion, golf course, parking lot, concert grounds, Grand Staircase etc.). Some trees removed and many planted. Park design called for the filling of one ravine to create a large "meadow" (now the golf course). Many older ("pre-park") trees remain - particularly in the natural areas (ravines and bluffs) and near the lighthouse, which was federal property from 1851 until 2003. A number of trees in this "middle" area, therefore, can be approximately dated to the building of the park.

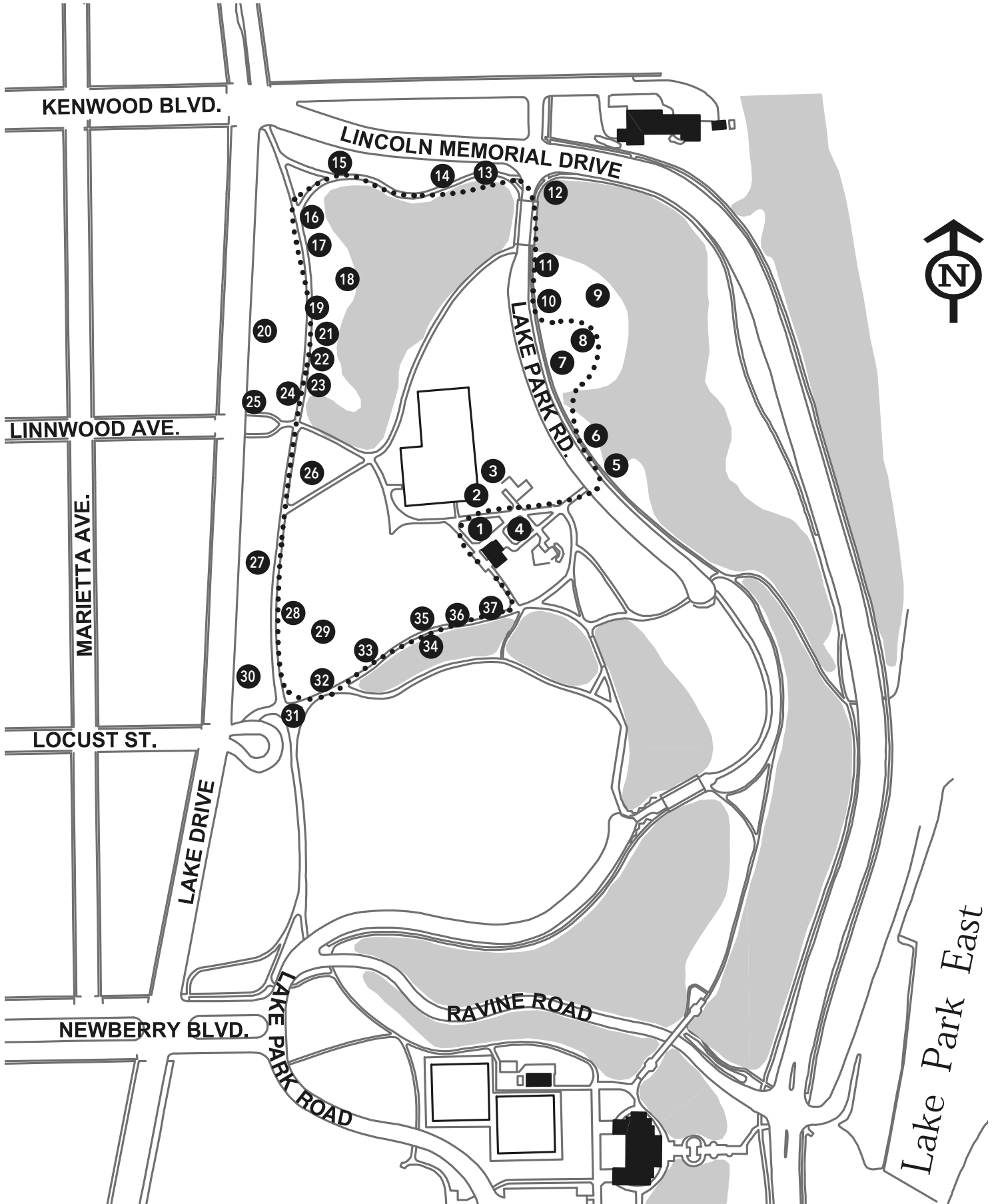
3.) South Part

The area most affected by tree removal. By 1890, most trees had been cut by owners. From 1890 to 1900, park builders worked to stabilize the eroding hillside along (now) Wahl, at which time they announced they were ready to plant trees and shrubs. The "screen" along both sides of Wahl was planted with white ash from Park Place to the Water Tower. Damp places, a "frog pond" and ravine (between Park and Belleview) and the tails of the two lighthouse ravines were filled by 1920. By 1930's, the bluff again was said to be "collapsing," and it was reinforced and replanted. Nonetheless, some old, pre-park and park-planted trees remain - particularly in the area surrounding the small "meadow" north of Belleview, and in the lighthouse area.

How to use this Tree Walk:

We have created three separate loops (north, middle and south - approximating the above divisions) each of which, we hope, will provide you with an enjoyable afternoon's stroll. Along the way we incorporate a little of the history of the park and point out several "champion" trees, among the largest of their species in the State.

NORTH LOOP



LAKE PARK TREE WALK - NORTH LOOP

Start at the Lake Park Friends Office in the Warming House, the red brick building near the tennis courts, and walk north along the path. The large evergreen on your right is a

1.) **Douglas Fir** (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), an important tree native to the West Coast, where it can reach a height of 300 feet and an age of 1,000 years. (This one is younger and smaller).

Continue on toward the tennis courts. The two large trees just south of the courts are

2.) **Swamp White Oaks** (*Quercus bicolor*). These trees are estimated to be about 190 years old and would have been known to the Native Americans before the coming of the white settlers.



Swamp White Oaks

Turn to your right and follow the walk along the playground. On your left are several slim

3.) **Pin Oaks** (*Quercus palustris*). Note the pyramidal shape of these trees in contrast to the round, spreading appearance of the other oaks. Note also the leaves which are similar to those of red oaks described later.

On the right are several

4.) **Honey Locusts** (*Gleditsia triacanthos*). These are common street and park trees which, however, lack the nasty thorns of their wild ancestors.

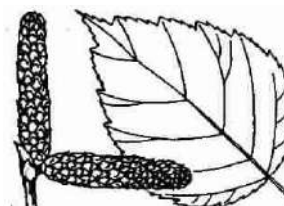


Honey Locust Branches

Continue on the to the east and cross the road. Just before the ravine are a number of new plantings. They include 5.) **Paper Birch** clusters (*Betula papyrifera*), **Musclewood** (*Carpinus carolina*), and several small **Red Oaks** (*Quercus rubra*). The Birches were planted to replace a number of mature trees that are dead or dying. The Musclewood is named for its muscular looking limbs. Its fruits are eaten by a number of birds. The Red Oaks are among seedlings planted by Lake Park Friends in previous years here and throughout the park.



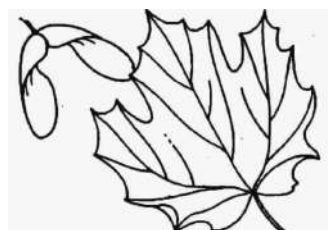
Musclewood leaf and fruit



Paper Birch leaf and catkins

Beyond this group observe the many large trees in and bordering the ravine including

6.) **Red Oak**, **Sugar Maple** (*Acer saccharum*), **Norway Maple** (*Acer platanoides*), **Balsam Poplars** (*Populus balsamifera*) and **Basswood** (*Tilia americana*). These are remnants of the original forest except for the non-native Norway Maple which has spread in recent years to these natural areas and is considered invasive. It can be distinguished from the Sugar Maple by the shape of the fruit and the color of the sap which is clear in the Sugar, but milky in the Norway.



Sugar Maple leaf and fruit



Norway Maple leaf and fruit

Continue along the sidewalk until you come to a "Picnic Area #6" sign. Just north of the sign, find a small tree with a bent trunk. This

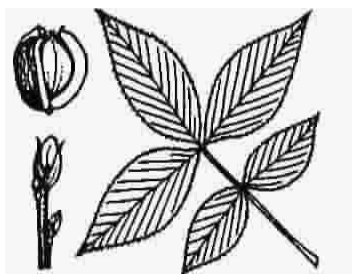
7.) **Ohio Buckeye** (*Aesculus glabra*) with its scaly bark and large, opposite, fan-compound leaves, is relatively young. It and a twin just behind it have striking fall colors.



Buckeye Leaf and Nut

To the east of the Buckeyes, scattered around the open area, are a number of newer plantings of

8.) **Sugar Maple** (*Acer saccharum*), **Shagbark Hickory** (*Carya ovata*), **Black Walnut** (*Juglans nigra*) and small **Red Oaks**. These are all native hardwood trees found in the natural areas. The Black Walnuts and Hickories produce tasty nuts enjoyed by both humans and squirrels.



Shagbark Hickory



Black Walnut

Behind the large open area is a row of smaller trees at the edge of the forest. They are

9.) **Quaking Aspens** (*Populus tremuloides*). These trees are striking for their fall colors and leaves that quake in the breeze. They can propagate through their roots to form large groves based on a single rhizome. They were planted in an area which had been a buckthorn thicket with the hope that they could successfully compete with that invasive species.

Just before you come to the bridge, find two park-planted trees next to each other. The first, a

10.) **Horsechestnut** (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), is a non-native similar to the native Ohio Buckeye. Both have large leaves and showy flowers in spring, but the Horsechestnut has large, sticky terminal buds. The nuts can be poisonous to humans, but squirrels seem to have no problem. Nor apparently do horses, since the nuts were once an ingredient in a cough syrup for horses - hence the name.



Horse-chestnut Nuts



Horse Chestnut Leaves

The second is an

11.) **English Elm** (*Ulmus procera*). This tall, beautiful tree is a "champion," among the largest tree of this species in Wisconsin.



Champion English Elm

Cross the Brick Arch Bridge toward Lincoln Memorial Drive. At the end of the bridge look to your right. About 50 feet east along the top of the ravine, find a large 12.) **European Beech** (*Fagus sylvatica*), recognizable by its smooth elephant-hide bark. This is another "champion," one of the largest reported European Beech in the State.



Champion European Beech

Cross Lake Park Rd. and follow the sidewalk west along Lincoln Memorial Drive toward Lake Drive. On your right, find a short, flat-topped evergreen.

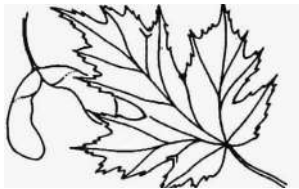
13.) **Scotch Pine** (*Pinus sylvestris*), with its orange-mottled, scaly bark. When young, Scotch Pine is a popular Christmas tree, but the flat top and crooked form develop with age.

Just beyond the pine find a pair of recently planted shrubs. These are

14.) **Serviceberries** (*Amelanchier sp.*), whose fruit, similar to blueberries, is a favorite of birds, and is the earliest to appear in the summer.

Further west is a

15.) **Silver Maple** (*Acer saccharinum*). This large tree with many galls may be only as old as the park, since these are fast-growing trees. Note the deeply notched leaves with their "silvery" underside.



Silver Maple leaf and fruit

On your left, as you turn to follow the sidewalk along Lake Drive, is a

16.) **Sugar Maple**. This is the Wisconsin State Tree, often part of a "Sugarbush," a grove of these trees used as the source of maple syrup. To differentiate it from the Silver Maple, note the broader leaves, the beautiful fall color, and the rougher bark.

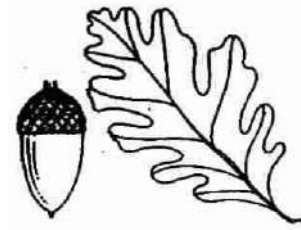
Just beyond the Sugar Maple is a small bushy tree, a

17.) **Redbud Crabapple** (*Malus spp.*). This newly planted tree has attractive flowers in the spring and bright red fruit in the fall.

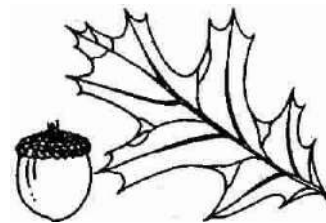
On your far left, the walk parallels the original (pre-park) North Ravine forest.

18.) **Sugar Maples, Red Oaks and White Oaks** (*Quercus alba*) are among the large trees visible.

The Red Oaks are readily distinguished from the White Oaks by their coarser bark and by their leaves, which in the case of the White Oaks, have rounded lobes. The Red Oak leaves have pointed tips on the end of the lobes.



White Oak Leaves and Acorns



Red Oak Leaves and Acorns

The Olmsted plan for the park included a "screening woods" of trees and shrubs intended to separate the park from the adjoining neighborhood. Some trees were planted while many of the original forest trees were allowed to remain.

At the second lamp post south of the corner, find two native oaks across from each other, a

19.) **Red Oak** to the east of the walk, and **Swamp White Oak** (*Quercus bicolor*) to the west. The term "bicolor" refers to the difference between the upper and lower surfaces of the leaves. Both trees are estimated to be about 145 years old.

The group of small trees west of the walk with distinctive red fruits are

20.) **Hawthorns** (*Crataegus spp.*). Several varieties are included in the Olmsted planting plans and they remain popular landscape trees attractive to both people and wildlife.



Hawthorn Grove

A little further south, on your left, is a newly planted tree, whose fall colors are striking. It is a 21.) **Ed Gartner Maple** (*Acer spp.*), a natural hybrid between a Silver and Red Maple with the rapid growth of the former and the bright fall color of the latter.

Further on, again on the left is a medium-sized tree with warty bark, an 22.) **American Hackberry** (*Celtis occidentalis*). Little purple fruits may be observed in the fall.



North of Linnwood Ave. are two native ashes which can be compared by examining their leaf shapes and fall colors.

23.) The **Green Ash** (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*) is west of the sidewalk and is recognized by the deep criss-crossing furrows in the bark and its yellow fall color.

24.) The **White Ash** (*Fraxinus Americana*), with similar, but somewhat smoother bark, has reddish fall color.



White Ash



Green Ash

West of the walk, by the "Lake Drive" signpost, is a 25.) **European Ash** (*Fraxinus excelsior*). Another "champion," this tree has held the State record for its species. It can be distinguished by its big black buds and gold fall color. It has been inoculated in an attempt to avoid the problems caused by the Emerald Ash Borer which has destroyed many ashes throughout the Midwest.

At Linnwood, note how the path divides to form a triangle.

In 1894 Christian Wahl redesigned the Olmsted plan of the walkway in order to "save some of our valuable trees." He then announced his intention to plant "large trees" in each of the corners of the triangle. Today we find 26.) two **Catalpas** (*Catalpa speciosa*) with large heart shaped leaves and long cigar-shaped pods as well as a large **Basswood** here - perhaps the work of Wahl.



Catalpa

The group of evergreens along the way is dominated by 27.) **Austrian Pines** (*Pinus nigra*) and **Scotch Pines**. Both have needles in bundles of two, but the Austrian Pine needles are longer (4" - 7") than the Scotch (1" - 3"). These are popular park plantings since they are tolerant of pollution and drought.

Further on, east of the path, we find a row of large trees, 28.) four **Red Oaks** in a row, probably also plantings by Wahl, as he was said to have moved several large oaks from the countryside into the park.

About 40 ft. to your left is a tree with a shaggy bark, a 29.) **Shagbark Hickory** (*Carya ovata*). This young tree could be the offspring of a near-by, 190 year old Shagbark Hickory which became diseased and was removed in 2002. The cross section has been preserved for educational purposes.

Find a red fire hydrant on your right. Walk toward Lake Drive. Along the street is a striking

30.) **European Copper Beech** (*Fagus sylvatica 'Atropunicea'*), a variety easily identified by its red leaves and smooth grey bark.

Go west to the grass triangle in back of the Locust Street turn-around. The large tree is a 31.) **Swamp White Oak**. Estimated to be almost 200 years old, this tree was here before the times of the white settlers. This lowland tree (ergo "swamp") has wood that is similar to that of the White Oak, but has different leaves.



Swamp White Oak leaves



Big Swamp White Oak

Turn to your left and follow the sidewalk toward the Warming House. On your left find a 32.) **Catalpa** with a jungle type buttress trunk, heart-shaped leaves and large showy flowers. Its long narrow pods with many seeds are sometimes called "Indian Cigars". **Catalpa** is the American Indian name for these trees.

On your right is the edge of the Locust Street Ravine, containing native species such as 33.) **Red and White Oak, Basswood, Ashes and Shagbark Hickory**. Recently, the Locust Street Ravine has been restored; some alien trees and shrubs have been removed and natives planted. The "snags," however, remain, as they provide important shelter for wildlife. Birders have been particularly excited to watch the rare red-headed woodpecker build a nest and raise a family in these trees.

East of the sidewalk again on the left find two 34.) **Ohio Buckeyes** which may be distinguished by their striking fall colors and fan-compound leaves,

Also the left of the sidewalk are several newly planted 35.) **White Spruces** (*Picea glauca*). Spruces are often used as Christmas trees but are also important lumber trees in Wisconsin. They are also widely used for landscaping purposes.

Continue along the path. Near the corner on your left are 36.) **White Pines** (*Pinus strobus*), with their soft, fine, five-needle bundles. White Pines, once called "The Monarchs of the North," were dominant in Northern Wisconsin before they were decimated by the timber industry. These desirable trees are being replanted in many places.



White Pine cones and leaves

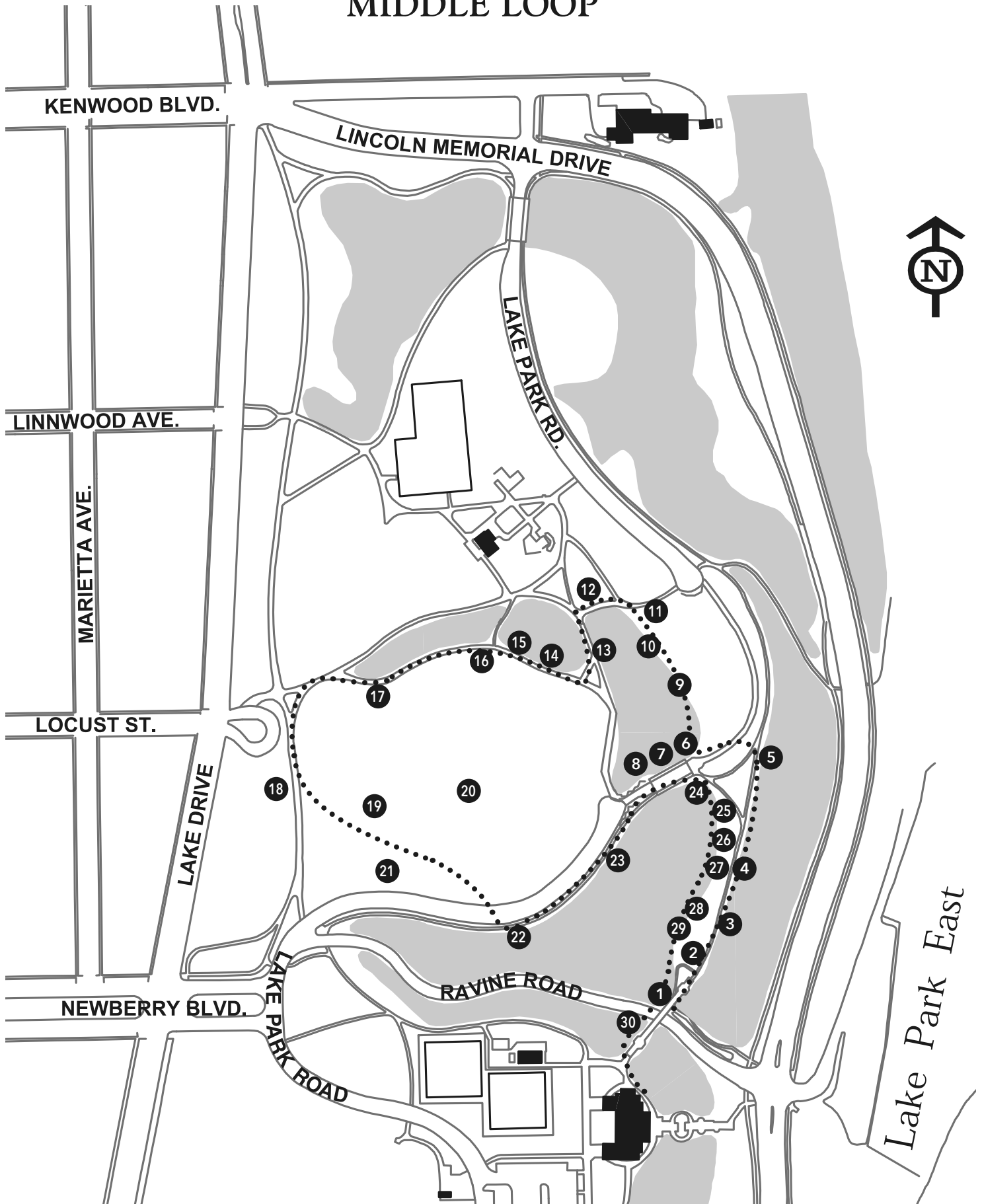


White Pines

As you turn the corner toward the Warming House, note the trees on your left, several tall 37.) **Green Ashes**. These trees predate the park and may have been planted by the Lueddemann family to shade their buildings, which were located in this area. These trees are susceptible, as are all ashes, to the Emerald Ash Borer, but have been inoculated to combat this pest. Unfortunately, most of the ashes in the park will probably succumb. Lake Park Friends has been involved in an aggressive program to plant other species.

Now return to the Warming House and either end your walk or continue with the other park tree walks.

MIDDLE LOOP



LAKE PARK TREE WALK - MIDDLE LOOP

Begin at the top of the Grand Staircase behind the Pavilion and take the sidewalk to the north.. As you cross the Concrete Foot Bridge, look to your left.

1.) The mixture of conifers and deciduous trees in the ravine provides one of the park “hot spots” for birders. The large evergreens are mostly non-native **Norway spruces** (*Picea abies*) with their large cones and hanging branches providing an attraction for spring warblers.

Continue across the bridge. To your left are two large

2.) **Norway Maples** (*Acer platanoides*). Note the large leaves and widely-spaced winged seeds. These non-native trees cast a dense shade and keep grass from growing under them.



Norway Maple leaves and seeds

A little farther on your right, notice a number of 3.) **Black Locusts** (*Robina pseudoacacia*). Originally planted to control bluff erosion, these trees clone (multiply by suckers from their root systems) and produce offspring, many examples of which can be seen further down the path.



Black Locust Trees



Black Locust seeds and leaves

Further on your right opposite a bench is a tree leaning over the path with yellowish bark, a 4.) **Red Mulberry** (*Morus rubra*). It has abundant black fruit beloved by the birds. The fruit, which dots the sidewalk when it falls when ripe, is too high in the tree for humans to reach.



Mulberry leaves and fruit

Behind the first bench on the right are newly planted native trees. These include 5.) **Bur Oak** (*Quercus macrocarpa*), **Red Oak** (*Quercus rubra*), and **Hackberry** (*Celtis occidentalis*). These are part of the tree plantings arranged by Lake Park Friends to replace trees that have been lost in recent years.

Follow the second narrow path to the left and proceed toward the Steel Arch Bridge over the Locust Street Ravine .



Bridge in the 1920s

The view from this bridge shows a variety of trees. 6.) This is a major transition area; north of here many trees, and their offspring, remain from the original native forest, while to the south other species were introduced as the park was built. Examples of both can be seen here.



View of Ravine from the Bridge

At the western corner on the right side of the bridge is a

7.) **European Copper Beech** (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Atropunicea'), with its smooth grey bark and copper-colored leaves, which may have been planted when the bridge was completed in 1893. Construction of the bridges in the park left steep, barren sides on which vegetation was planted to control erosion.

Next to it is a

8.) **Black Cherry** (*Prunus serotina*). Note the characteristic "potato chip" bark of this valuable forest tree.



Trunk of Black Cherry Tree

Do not cross the bridge but proceed north along the edge of the ravine about 50 feet. In the wooded area notice a tree with shaggy bark, a

9.) **Shagbark Hickory** (*Carya ovata*). These are slowly growing native trees whose edible nuts are enjoyed by both humans and squirrels



Shagbark Hickory

Continue walking north toward the stage and follow the line of trees on the western edge of the meadow. Behind and beyond the stage are a 10.) **European Copper Beech** and a grove of **Eastern White Cedars** (*Thuja occidentalis*), commonly known as **Arborvitae**, literally "Trees of Life." The term refers to its use by French voyagers to treat scurvy. The small tree on your right in the middle of the field is a **Bur Oak** (*Quercus macrocarpa*), a recently planted memorial tree. In the middle of the field to the east is a lone tree, another **Shagbark Hickory**.



Arborvitae

Continue beyond the summer stage. Just before the walk on the right is a newly planted 11.) **Princeton American Elm** (*Ulmus americana* 'Princeton'). This cultivar, discovered in New Jersey, is less susceptible to Dutch Elm disease. We hope it will one day replace the beautiful elms that graced our park in the past.

As you turn left and follow the path away from the lake, to the right note the number of 12.) **Red and White Oaks**. These trees predate the park and may have been the location of an "Oak Grove" mentioned on older maps. Amid them are two **Hop hornbeams** (*Ostrya virginiana*) with their hop-like fruits hanging on late in the season.



Hop hornbeam leaf and fruit

Turn to your left and cross the rustic bridge.



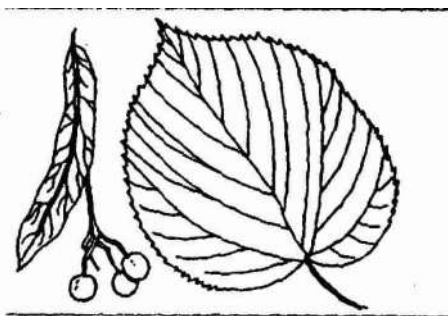
Original Rustic Bridge

Just beyond the bridge on your left, note the multi-trunked tree.

13.) This is another example of the suckering characteristic of the **Basswood**. Note also the large heart-shaped leaves and fragrant blossoms which, in spring, attract large numbers of bees.



Basswood Suckers



Basswood leaf and seeds

Turn right on the cinder path and continue walking west toward the street.

14.) On your right is the southern side of the Locust Street Ravine with many native species including **Red Oaks**, **Sugar Maples** and **Basswoods**.



Edge of Locust Street Ravine

About 50 feet from the bridge find another 15.) **Shagbark Hickory** (*Carya ovata*) which someone has conveniently identified. (Look for an old green label on the tree). A little further west is a **Paper Birch** (*Betula papyrifera*) with its distinctive white bark that, with age, becomes mottled with black.



Birch Bark

At the turn of the path, on your left find a 16.) **White Oak** (*Quercus alba*). This magnificent tree is over 200 years old and the largest White Oak in the park. White Oaks are long-lived, but they cannot tolerate compacted soil or root disturbance.



Big White Oak

This oak is now surrounded by plantings of prairie flowers. Among them are two offspring of the oak.



Prairie Flowers

Beyond the oak extending up to the sidewalk is an interesting collection of trees.

17.) Note the old **Ash** (*Fraxinus sp.*), **Oak** (*Quercus sp.*), **Basswood**, and **Silver Maple** (*Acer saccharinum*) trees. These are *thought* to be remnants of the native forest in which some trees were removed to make a picnic grounds. Notice how some of the trees are bent at an angle, perhaps indicating they were once part of a larger forest. Here, and in other places throughout the park are recently planted **Red Oaks**.



Part of Mixed Grove

Turn to your left and walk south along the paved walk. On your right just beyond the traffic turn around is a grove of 18.) **Hawthorns**. These small trees with the big thorns are attractive to birds because of their sweet fruit.

Continue along the walk until you come abreast of a mound with a plaque at its center. This is an Indian Mound estimated to be 1500 years old. It is a type of burial mound that the Woodland Indians constructed. Please give it the respect due a sacred place.



Our Indian Mound

To the right of the mound is a 19.) **European Horse-chestnut** (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) probably a park planting. Note the "hand-shaped" leaves of the Horse-chestnut (well, seven fingered hand-shaped).



Horse-chestnut leaves and nuts

East of the mound in the middle of the field are two large

20.) **White Ashes** (*Fraxinus americana*) with an interesting history. The lower branches of these trees, which are thought to be about 200 years old, are said to have been bent by Native Americans to serve as trail markers. One tree had a very large branch that had to be removed after it cracked from too many people swinging on it..



Trail Marker White Ash

Continue across the field. Beyond the mound to the south are two recent plantings, an 21.) **American Beech** (*Fagus grandifolia*) with is smooth bark and leaves that stay on into the winter and a **Swamp White Oak** (*Quercus bicolor*), which was a donated tree.

Turn toward the lake and proceed across the road. The wooded area ahead is along the lower part of the Locust St. ravine. Note the mixture of deciduous and conifer trees.

22.) **Green and White Ashes** are the predominant species which are susceptible to the Emerald Ash Borer and will probably die off in the next few years.



Mixed forest

Continue along the road toward the Steel Arch Bridge. Just before you come to the bridge note a row of recently planted trees including a cluster of

23.) **Paper Birches.** These are native northern trees whose southern range boundary may be moving north.

Cross the bridge and follow the line of mature trees behind some newly planted trees.

24.) This is the edge of the Locust Street Ravine which includes such native species as **White Ash**, **Green Ash** (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*) **Basswood** and **Black Cherry**. The Basswoods and the Black Cherry are among the tallest in the park.

Continue south along the ravine edge and notice several newly planted shrubs and trees. Among them is a

25.) **Hop Hornbeam** with male catkins and fruit that looks like hops.

Nearer to the ravine is a

26.) **Witch-hazel** (*Hamamelis virginiana*). These unusual plants bloom in late autumn, often after snow has fallen. For this reason they were often assumed to have magical properties and used as divining rods to discover water.

Continue along the forest edge and find another newly planted tree, a

27.) **Kentucky Coffee Tree** (*Gymnocladus dioica*). This member of the pea family has rare twice-compounded leaves. Its seeds are somewhat similar to coffee beans although it is not related to tropical coffee trees.

Beyond it in the middle of the open area is a 28.) **River Birch** (*Betula nigra*). This tree is distinguished from the more common **Paper Birch** by its darker peeling bark and more pointed leaves.

Continue along the path until you come to three newly planted evergreens on the right. These are 29.) **Eastern Hemlock** (*Tsuga canadensis*). They are a common tree in our northern forests. Their round tops and flat horizontal twigs distinguish these beautiful trees from other evergreens.



Hemlock

Now cross the bridge again. Just beyond it on the right is a cluster of

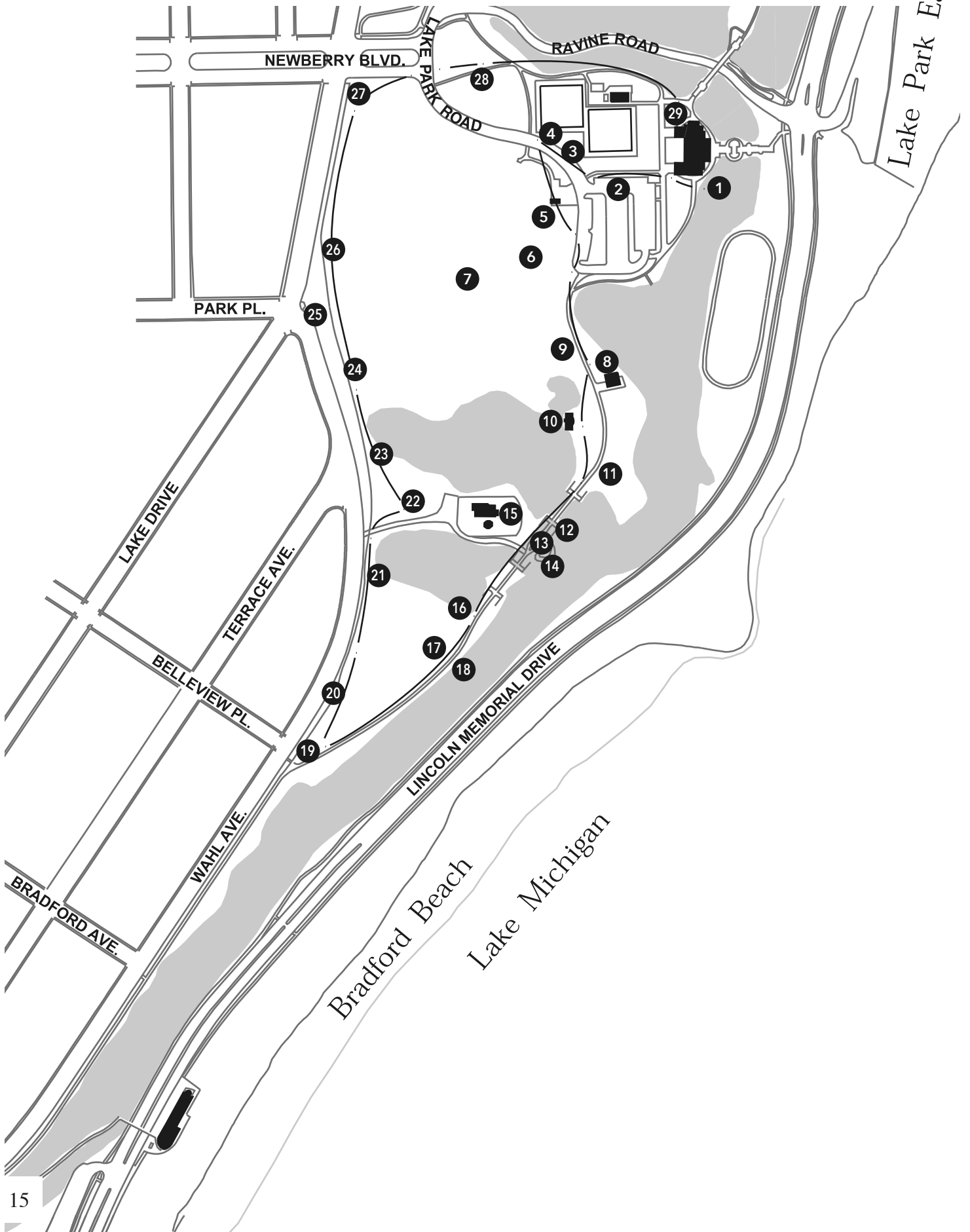
27.) **Staghorn Sumac** (*Rhus typhina*). These small trees are both useful, in that they stabilize poor and eroding soil, and beautiful with their orange fall colors and red plumes.



Staghorn Sumac

Now return to the start and take a rest in the Marcia Coles Community Room in the lower level of the pavilion.

SOUTH LOOP



LAKE PARK TREE WALK - SOUTH LOOP

Begin at the head of the Grand Staircase behind the Pavilion. Find the two tall trees about halfway down the steps to their right. They are

1.) **Bitternut Hickories** (*Carya cordiformis*). These trees are about 100 years old and may have been planted after the completion of the staircase in 1908. Or, squirrels may have spit out the nuts when they discovered their "bitter" taste.



Bitternut Hickories

Go up the steps on the south of the Pavilion and walk west.

2.) Three small **Gingkos** (*Ginkgo biloba*) line the walk north of the parking lot. The unpleasant aroma of their fruit helps identify this ancient species.



Ginkgo with Fruit

On your right are three small

3.) **Hawthorns** (*Crataegus sp.*) which often shelter flocks of birds eager to gobble up their fruit.



Hawthorn Fruit

Further to your right is a large tree next to the lawn bowling green. It is a

4.) **European Copper Beech** (*Fagus sylvatica 'Atropunicea'*) with many galls. This old tree is often covered with beech nuts in summer.

Turn to your left and walk toward the golf course. A grove of four mature evergreens is visible on the right. These are are

5.) **White Spruces** (*Picea glauca*). These beautiful evergreens are common Wisconsin forest trees and are sometimes used as Christmas trees.



Grove of Spruces

The open area beyond the spruces was planned as a "meadow" by Olmsted. It was preserved as an open green space until the golf course was built in 1903.



Golf Course in Fall

A number of small trees, both evergreen and deciduous, dot the golf course. Among them, beyond the line of spruces is a

6.) **Black Alder** (*Alnus glutinosa*). This tree is a favorite perching place for insect-eating birds who skim over the golf course. The Alder tree has little seed catkins which resemble pine cones.



Alder Branch with Catkins

Other small trees found within the Golf Course beyond the Alder are

7.) **Amur Maples** (*Acer Ginnala*), **Flowering Crabapples** (*Malus spp.*), **Hawthorns** and a variety of evergreen trees. Many of the trees, used to define the fairways, have striking fall colors.

Continue walking on the pathway to the south past the waterfall on the left. Beyond it are a pair of service buildings. Adjacent to the first one, note the group of evergreen spruces.

8.) Farthest from the path is a **Colorado Blue Spruce** (*Picea pungens*) with its soft blue gray color, followed by an angular **Serbian Spruce** (*Picea omorika*) and then three large, full **White Spruces**.



Spruce Group

Across from them, on the right side of the walk, is a small

9.) **Hesse European Ash** (*Fraxinus excelsior 'Hessei'*). This is an unusual ash tree, since it has simple, rather than compound, leaves.

Continue south past the service buildings to the Wolcott statue. Behind the statue is a row of

10.) **Serviceberries** (aka **Juneberries** or **Shadberries**) (*Amelanchier sp.*) much loved by birds that frequent the area. Behind them are three **White Spruces** planted by Lake Park Friends. On either side of the statue notice the small birds flitting around in the shrubs. This is a “birding hot spot” frequented by birders and birds all year long.

Continue walking south toward the two Lion Bridges. Just before the first Bridge find six newly planted shrubs, three on each side of the walk. These are 11.) **Apple Serviceberries**, cultivars of the native plants by the statue with the same berries but prettier flowers.

Cross the bridge. On your left, overhanging the path is a 12.) **Bradford Callery Pear** (*Pyrus calleriana 'Bradford'*). A tree by the southern Lion Bridge was a Wisconsin champion, the largest in the State, but it was the victim of a storm. These southern trees have been considered to be outside of their usual range. But they may move north as a result of climate change.



Callery Pear at end of Lion Bridge

In front of the Lighthouse the path now divides. In the center, find two small

13.) **Ornamental Crabapple** trees (*Malus sp.*). These popular landscaping trees are found throughout the park and brighten it up in the spring time.

The semi-circular area on your left was created by park planners who surrounded it with pillars and a chain fence so that horse-drawn carriages would not topple down the bluff. They envisioned it as a lake overlook which might someday enclose a fountain. It is currently being reconstructed. To hold the steep bluff, they planted stands of

14.) **Green Ash** (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), **Black Locust** (*Robina pseudoacacia*) and **Red Oak** (*Quercus rubra*).



Lake Overlook after partial reconstruction

Now turn west and approach the Lighthouse. To the right, standing alone, find a 15.) **Red Mulberry** (*Morus rubra*) whose dark fruits make a refreshing snack for park walkers - if the birds don't take them first!



Mulberry and Lighthouse

Return to the sidewalk and cross the second Lion Bridge. To your right, in back of the small rain garden and along the edge of the South Lighthouse Ravine are 16.) **Silver** and **Norway Maples** (*Acer saccharinum* and *platanoides*). These were part of a planned grove surrounding the meadow. Three newly planted **Nannyberries** (*Viburnum lentago*) are found in the same area.

On the right side of the path is a row of small trees. These are spring flowering trees and are part of a planned "allee" which should be a backdrop to spring wedding photographs. They include

17.) **Hawthorns, Serviceberries, and Flowering Crabapples**, to which other flowering trees will be added.

The trees lining the bluff on your left include 18.) **Black Locusts, Norway Maples, and Green Ash**, a mixture of erosion control plants and volunteers.

Virginia Creepers, with their scarlet fall cover, climb up a few of these trees.



Locust Tree with Virginia Creeper

Continue following the sidewalk south until you come to the end of the meadow on the right. Locate the large trees near the corner of the meadow,

19.) **White Ashes** (*Fraxinus americana*). White Ashes once lined both sides of the street. A few remain on the park side. Most have been replaced with **Bald Cypress** (*Taxodium distichum*), a conifer associated with southern swamps which loses its leaves in the fall (therefore "bald"). The smaller variety planted here has adapted well to Milwaukee winters.



Bald Cypress

On your left, from here south, many trees on the bluff have been removed and replaced with native shrubs and herbaceous plants

Turn to your right and follow the sidewalk north along Wahl Avenue.

20.) The trees on your right serve two purposes envisioned by the original park planners. They are part of a "screen" separating the park from the urban neighborhood, and they enclose the small meadow to the east. They include many old **Silver** and **Norway Maples** and **Basswoods**, as well as more recently planted **Red Oak** and **Flowering Crabapples**.

At the north end of this meadow, find a tree with a "Milwaukee County Park System Girl Scout" sign.

It is a

21.) **Hackberry** (*Celtis occidentalis*) with its warty bark and purple berries.



Hackberry with sign

Walk past the entrance to the first ravine. To the right, in front of the Lighthouse, are two recently planted 22.) **Autumn Blaze Maples** (*Acer rubrum* 'Autumn Blaze'). These trees have replaced two large **Silver Maples** near the Lighthouse that were more than 100 years old. They may have been part of the landscaping for the Lighthouse, which had been on these grounds since 1855. The new trees are striking for their fall color.



Locate the grove of trees on the north edge of the small meadow by the Lighthouse. These include

23.) **Basswood, Maple, Hackberry, and Ginkgo** trees, all of which may have been part of the landscaping for the Lighthouse meadow.

Walk past the entrance to the second Lighthouse Ravine. As you continue north, note the many large trees, primarily

24.) **Ashes, Maples, Hackberries** and newly planted **Oak** saplings, forming, together with smaller shrubs, a "screen" for the park.

At Park Place, where Wahl Ave. meets Lake Drive, find a conical-shaped tree in the triangle on your left. This is a

25.) **Redmond Linden** (*Tilia americana* 'Redmond'), a cultivar of the **Basswood**, which has the conical shape of a **European Linden** (*Tilia euchlora*). Compare this to the many related native **Basswoods** to the north.

Further on, to the right, is a grove of two small, fruit-bearing trees. These are

26.) **Common Apple** (*Malus pemula*), which help to screen the golf course from the path, and provide edible fruit for wildlife - including the occasional hungry golfer.



Apple Tree Screen



Apple Tree Fruit

Continue north to Newberry Blvd .and turn right. At the entrance to the park, on your right, is a 27.) **European Larch** (*Larix decidua*). Related to the native **Tamarack** (*Larix laricina*), this cone-bearing tree displays a soft yellow fall color before losing its needles in November. Several **Tamaracks** are planned for other locations in the park.



European Larch

Cross Lake Park Road and follow the sidewalk toward the Pavilion.

28.) You are passing through a mixed grove, including **Basswoods, Maples, Oaks** (*Quercus spp.*) and **Gingkos**, all of the same age and possibly planted after the Pavilion and Concert Grove were completed in 1903.

Continue on to the Pavilion. At its north end look for a 29.) **Sugar Maple** (*Acer saccharum*), the State Tree, here framing the Pavilion. This tree with its striking autumn colors, is a fitting symbol of the park and a fitting conclusion to this walk.



Sugar Maple at Pavilion

Now follow the walk around the back of the Pavilion and take a rest in the Marcia Coles Community Room.

--The End--

Appendix: Our Distinctive Trees

Since the first edition of this book (2003), a number of trees have succumbed to disease or weather and had to be removed, while new ones have been planted, including some donated by park users. With each successive printing, we have tried to keep up with these disappearances and new appearances. We have removed the rankings of "champion" trees since they may not have kept up with their rivals. The trees were remeasured in 2011 and the following table compares them to the 2002 measurements.

Species	location	year	points	circ	height	spread
<i>Ulmus procera</i> English Elm	LP road	2002	197	121	62	58
		2011	244	135	92	69
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> European Ash	LK Dr	2002	170	86	73	45
		2011	191	95	84	48
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> European Ash	LK Dr	2002	157	78	67	47
		2011	188	86	89	49
<i>Pyrus calleriana</i> Bradford Callery Pear	LH	2002	88	48	32	34
		2011	113	62	42	36
<i>Ostrya virginia</i> Amer. Hophornbeam	Golf C.	2002	106	59	35	48
		2011	131	64	59	56
		2016	CUT DOWN IN 2016			
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i> European Beech	LM Dr	2002	234	137	70	68
		2011	260	149*	92	77
<i>Populus balsamifera</i> Balsam Poplar	N Ravine	2011	257	102	150	55

Thanks!

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Other Resources:

Our search for historical information has taken us to many sources. They include

- the 1835 government survey describing the original heavily forested area;
- The Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted, edited by Johns Hopkins University Press, for insights into the philosophy of this great landscape architect;
- the Plans of Lake Park presented by the Olmsted firm beginning in 1889, including graphic designs and the "planting lists" of horticulturist Warren Manning;
- the Annual Reports of the City of Milwaukee Park Commission from 1890 to 1920; and
- the correspondence between the Olmsted firm and Milwaukee's Lake Park planners.

Photos by the authors.

*Dolores Knopfelmacher and Gil Walter, 2003.
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