

Tree Tour at The Ridges

If you've been looking for an outdoor activity for the crisp Fall weather, check out the [Ridges Tree Tour](#) on [mAppAthens](#), created by the OHIO Museum Complex! ohio.edu/mappathens

This web-based app helps you to explore and learn about trees as you walk around The Ridges and enjoying nature.

The tour begins at Lin Hall on The Ridges, home to the [Ohio Museum Complex](#) and [Kennedy Museum of Art](#). Across the road from the Lin Hall entrance is a stately **Sugar Maple**, and to the east is a giant **Ginkgo** tree. Take time to study these impressive giants, and to think about the questions provided below.

Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum* Family: Sapindaceae)

The Sugar maple is a deciduous tree which typically grows 40 to 80 feet tall (sometimes reaching 100 feet) with a dense, rounded crown. Sugar maples are long-lived trees which grow relatively slowly. Sugar maple leaves measure 3-6 inches wide, with 3-5 lobes per leaf. These leaves turn brilliant yellow-orange in autumn, and the fruit is the familiar two-winged maple samara. A familiar component of hardwood forests in the eastern United States, the Sugar maple makes an excellent shade tree, but is perhaps most famous for the high sugar content of its sap. Native Americans taught the early colonists how to tap these trees to make maple syrup which has now become a multibillion-dollar industry in the U.S. and Canada. The Sugar maple leaf is also the national symbol of Canada.

- Have you ever tasted maple syrup? Did you know it came from trees?
- Look at the shape of the leaves on this tree. Does it remind you of any country's flag? (Hint: Our neighbors up north!)
- What color are the leaves today?



Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba* Family: Ginkgoaceae)

Colloquially known as "maidenhair tree," the ginkgo is native to China and used as an ornamental across the world. The fan-shaped leaves of this tree are characteristic; they are bright green in spring and summer and a brilliant yellow-golden in the fall. The reddish-brown and vertically grooved bark of the tree can also help to identify this species in winter. Ginkgoes are unique because they are the single remaining species in their class—all closest tree relatives can only be found as fossils. *Ginkgo biloba* itself has been around for over 200 million years old largely unchanged. Ginkgo trees are dioecious, meaning trees are either male or female. The pinkish-orange fruits of the female trees are foul smelling and inedible. This particular tree is hiding a historic surprise beside its massive trunk—take a look!

- What color are the ginkgo leaves today? If you can, go over to Voigt Hall near College Green to smell the fruits.
- Try to find a leaf on the ground, what shape is it? Can you put these leaves together in different patterns to make new shapes?

Fun with Leaves

Below are some activities that can be done with the leaves on the tree tour. Bring some crayons, paper, and your imagination! Get creative!

Leaf Rubbing Art

What you will need: Crayons, Paper, Leaves

Steps:

1. Find a leaf or some leaves that you find interesting.
2. Place a leaf under a piece of paper. Thinner paper is better to use.
3. Rub the flat side of your crayon on the paper over the leaf to create your artwork.

(**Tip:** Pencils don't work as well as crayons or oil pastels because the point is too small. Rubbings work best with tools that have a long side to make marks.)

Optional: Add extra lines around your leaf rubbing to create something new! For example, the picture to the right shows a new drawing made from a rubbing of ginkgo tree leaves.

- Can you see the leaves hidden in this drawing?



Leaf Collage

What you will need: Leaves, Glue

Create a masterpiece using the leaves you find on the tree tour. They do not need to be from the two trees listed but can be made from any leaves you find on the ground.

Optional: If you like, glue the leaves down. See how they change as they dry out and become brittle!

Share your creations with us!

Instagram: [@ohiomuseumcomplex](#) & [@kennedymuseumartedu](#)

Facebook (Kennedy Museum of Art Experiences Group [facebook.com/groups/kennedymuseumartedu/?ref=share](https://www.facebook.com/groups/kennedymuseumartedu/?ref=share))!



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