

These, however, are sweetbay magnolia, native to the Atlantic Coastal Plain. On the right side, a flowering dogwood stands beside the magnolia and on the left, a holly stands in front of the plum.



Behind you, in the front oval, are crabapple trees and two Japanese maples native to Asia, with their distinctive red leaves. Walk over and stand between the Japanese maple and crabapple on your left.

Across the drive from you is a very full beech tree with its distinctive bark, like the hide of an elephant. This is known as a cutleaf beech with its shiny leaves that appear to have been “cut” with fabric shears. The cutleaf beech is one of a number of European varieties, planted in the United States as ornamental trees. The tall, narrow tree to the right of them hiding behind an evergreen is a ginkgo tree. With fan-shaped leaves, the ginkgo is native to eastern China and has been cultivated since antiquity.

The main drive leading to Beechmont Avenue is bordered with large American beech and blue spruce (square needles around each branch). In the fall they provide a striking gold and blue border. The two evergreens closest to the oval are douglas firs (flat needles around each branch).

As you walk to the other end of the oval you can see a sorrel tree between the douglas fir and a large beech tree. The sorrel-tree, with tiny white flowers in July and August, is also called “sourwood” because of the acid taste of its leaves. In autumn the leaves turn brilliant red and purple. The leaves may be

sour but honey produced from its flower is considered a delicacy in Appalachia.

On the corner is a river birch with three trunks and distinctive shaggy bark. Beyond it in front of the parking spaces is a basswood (linden) tree with fragrant white flowers in late June. Beside the basswood is a flowering crabapple with a tall cone-shaped bald cypress to its right. The cypress is common in the wetlands of the southeast and its leaves turn orange-brown in the fall. Immediately to the right is a black tupelo, whose glossy leaves are brilliant red in the fall. On the corner is a dawn redwood, a Chinese variety planted in the United States since the late 1940’s.



Behind you, on the corner of the north entrance, is a tall narrow english oak, not native to the United States but cultivated here. Walking towards the Bartlett Pastoral Center, a row of maple trees to your left provide one of the most striking autumn displays on the grounds. Across from the pastoral center, a sweetgum tree stands to the right of the walk leading down to Beechmont Avenue and a flowering dogwood to the left. Behind you is a scotch pine with short needles and two red pines with red-brown bark and long, fine needles.

Standing at the top of the driveway to Beechmont Avenue you will notice that it is lined with ash and maple trees. To the left of them you can see the tall evergreens (pine, fir, and spruce) decorating the lawn. To your right are two red-cedar trees, common in Ohio.



Turn around and begin down



the fall.

the walk to the left of the Bartlett Pastoral Center parking lot. Notice the large sweetgum tree on your left with its star-shaped leaves that

turn many different colors in the fall. To your left and down the hill you can see two Chinese chestnut trees to the right of a large black walnut. In southwest Ohio, the forest canopy is dominated by beech, maple, and oak. Before 1900, the American chestnut also belonged in their number, but a fungus, first observed in 1904 in New York, damaged nearly every adult tree. Further along the driveway, you pass a number of other black walnut trees on your left. Apart from wild black cherry, the wood from perfectly shaped black walnut trees is the most valuable in our area. Notice how far apart these trees are planted. Walnut leaves exude an organic compound that hinders the growth of other plants, even walnut seedlings.



Continue to follow the walk around to the back of the property. The back lawn is bordered by evergreen trees. White pines (five needles to a leaf) dominate the back of the field and surround the tennis courts. In the colonial period, white pines over 24 inches in diameter were used as masts for ships in the royal navy.

At the fire hydrant, turn right. As you face the courtyard across from the Pastoral Center, notice the tall pin oak between two beech trees. This oak belongs to the red oak family and is common in southwest Ohio. It can easily be identified at a distance because of the branch pattern: lower branches incline

downward, the middle ones are horizontal. The courtyard includes a number of trees that we have already encountered. Stop and see if you can identify the hemlock, holly, river birch, magnolia, and beech.

Continue the tour by returning to the back of the property and turning right. Opposite the rear of the chapel is a cluster of three large trees: two ash and one white oak. Specialists distinguish between black, red, white, and blue ash trees. These are white ash trees. The leaves of the white oaks have rounded edges; those of the red oak family have pointed edges. Wooden barrels are generally made of white oak since the resin in its wood make it less porous and thus ideal for holding liquids.

As you continue along the rear of the seminary building, on your right you will see another bald cypress tree between two crabapple trees. Further along the walk, at the edge of the old amphitheater on your left is a large hackberry tree. A relative of the elm, hackberry wood is sometimes used for furniture and fencing, but it is chiefly planted as a shade tree. Beyond it to your left, just before the asphalt drive ends, is a sassafras tree in front of white pines. The sassafras is characterized by large leaves shaped like mittens. Its dried bark is used in medicines and teas.



As you round the corner and head towards the front of the building, you can see sugar maple trees on your left. Do not overlook the huge white oak tree dominating the courtyard and fountain on your right.

If you walk out to the handball court and look toward the street, you will see a tall American (or white) elm tree standing in the middle of the south lawn. The American elm

is noted for its beautiful vase-form. This one is relatively small for a white elm. The largest one in Ohio is in Marietta and is almost 27 feet in circumference. We are fortunate to have this one. Since 1930, Dutch elm disease has destroyed many such trees in the eastern forests. Note the huge beech trees beyond the elm. These are the remnants of a large stand of such trees that once distinguished this area. Continuing along the stone walk, you will return to the front of the building.

We hope that you have enjoyed this tour of our campus. If you would like to make a contribution to the Athenaeum to help with the continued care and development of our grounds, please contact our development office.



The Visual Arts Committee is grateful to Rev. Timothy Schehr for gathering the information and designing the original Athenaeum grounds and foliage tour.

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THE ATHENAEUM GROUNDS AND FOLIAGE

*Welcome to the
Athenaeum of Ohio!*

This pamphlet is one of a series of self-guided tours produced by the Visual Arts Committee. This tour highlights the grounds of the Athenaeum including some of our more interesting trees and other foliage. We

hope that you will enjoy touring the campus while you spend time learning, reflecting, and praying.



When the grounds of the Athenaeum were first planted, a conscious effort was made both to preserve some of the existing trees on the property and to enhance the grounds with a variety of trees and foliage from around the world. Flowering and non-flowering plants were chosen, as well as a wide selection of leaf and needle bearing trees.

These efforts are apparent when you stand at the foot of the steps of the main entrance and face the building. For the most part, the trees in front of the building are planted symmetrically. In the far corners of both the north and south wings, are hemlock trees with flat needles on each side of a branch. In front of the hemlocks, holly trees grace the side entrances. In the middle of each wing are crabapple trees. Plum trees are planted on either side of the main entrance with magnolia trees hiding behind them. Three species of magnolia are native to Ohio.