TREE SPECIES OF THE UPPER PENINSULA

What seems like a simple question, actually has a complicated answer. Do you include ornamentals? How about exotic species? Only native species? When does a shrub become a tree? You probably begin to see the picture. Nevertheless, the following 39 tree species should be a fairly complete list of non-ornamentals/hybrids, with some exceptions, and with a few common exotics.

Pines

- white pine (Pinus strobus)
- red or Norway pine (Pinus resinosa)
- jack pine (Pinus banksiana)
- Scotch pine (Pinus sylvestris), non-native from Europe

Spruces

- black spruce (Picea mariana)
- white spruce (Picea glauca)
- Colorado blue spruce (Picea pungens), non-native from Colorado
- Norway spruce (Picea abies), non-native from Europe

Other softwoods or conifers or evergreens

- tamarack (Larix laricina)
- northern white cedar (Thuja occidentalis)
- balsam fir (Abies balsamea)
- eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)
- Canada yew (Taxus canadensis)

Ashes

- white (Fraxinus americana)
- black (Fraxinus nigra)
- green or red (Fraxinus pensylvanica)
- mountain (Sorbus americana), not a true ash

Aspens & kin

- quaking aspen (Populus tremuloides)
- bigtooth aspen (Populus grandidentata)
- balm-of-Gilead or balsam poplar (Populus balsamifera)
- eastern cottonwood (Populus deltoides)

Birches
- paper (Betula papyrifera)
- yellow (Betula alleghaniensis)
- ironwood (Ostrya virginiana)
- musclewood (Carpinus caroliniana)

Maples
- sugar (Acer saccharum)
- red (Acer rubrum)
- silver (Acer saccharinum)
- boxelder (Acer negundo)

Oaks & kin
- northern red oak (Quercus rubra)
- northern pin oak (Quercus ellipsoidales)
- white oak (Quercus alba)
- bur oak (Quercus macrocarpa)
- beech (Fagus grandifolia)

Elms
- American elm (Ulmus americana)
- slippery or red elm (Ulmus rubra)

Other hardwoods or broadleaf or deciduous trees
- basswood (Tilia americana)
- butternut (Juglans cinerea)
- black cherry (Prunus serotina)
- bitternut hickory (Carya cordiformis)

TREES THAT COMMONLY GROW TOGETHER IN COMMUNITIES

Knowing which tree species usually grow with each other often helps to identify trees you might not know. If you know one or two tree species, you will be able to more easily guess what others might be found in the area. Some of the more common forest "associations" are listed here. Once you become good at knowing forest associations, try learning shrubs, flowers, and other plants that commonly occur in the communities.

Northern Hardwoods

The most common forest community in the U.P. Common tree species include sugar maple, basswood, beech, yellow birch, and ironwood. White pine, hemlock, and white ash are less common but can often be found mixed in with northern hardwoods.

Pine & Upland Conifer Communities

Jack pine often grows in nearly pure stands. Red pine and white pine occur in more mixed stands, including species such as red maple, paper birch, and aspen. White pine is probably grows in more communities than other pines. Balsam fir and white spruce often grow together on upland sites, many times in transition zones between hardwood uplands and swamps.

Swamp Hardwoods

Swamps are forested wetlands. Common tree species are black ash, American elm, and balm-of-Gilead. Balm usually grows more by itself and looks a lot like aspen. Along rivers, cottonwood, silver maple, and boxelder may grow.

Conifer Bog/Swamp Conifer Community

Northern white cedar, tamarack, and black spruce dominate this forest association. Sometimes tree species such balsam fir, white spruce, paper birch, and black ash can be found.

Aspen/Mixed Hardwoods

Quaking and bigtooth aspen generally form fairly pure stands. However, depending on the location, other tree species such as balsam fir, white spruce, paper birch, black cherry, sugar maple, and others may grow.