

# ArborTags



Usually larger than a maple leaf the Sycamore leaf has 3 or 5 shallow lobes with scattered teeth. The base of the leaf stem covers the bud for next season's growth. In autumn the leaves turn a dull, unexciting brown.

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*Platanus occidentalis*

## Sycamore

**Buttonwood,  
American Planetree**

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In autumn and winter you can see the 1 inch buttonballs hanging from the tips of the upper branches. During the winter these balls break open, releasing their treasure of seed.

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The most characteristic feature of the Sycamore is the peeling and flaking outer bark which reveals the inner whitish younger bark. The mottled brown, gray, purple, and white of its upper trunk and limbs is a sure sign of a Sycamore.

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The Sycamore is thought to be the first of the hardwoods to grow on Earth, surviving the ice ages. The buttonballs or monkeyballs are known to have been used as weapons in the environs now known as Pittsburgh. As a shade- tree, the Sycamore contends with the Tulip Tree as having the largest diameter trunk.

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