

How to Create a Plant ID Collection

Many students are required to create a plant ID collection for school, but putting together a leaf collection can be fun and interesting, whether it is as a class assignment or not!

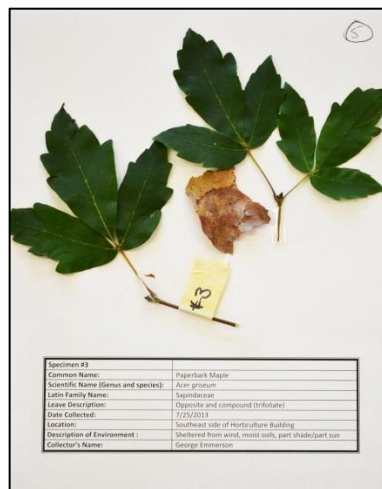
- 1) **Making a Tour Map:** Before visiting the Purdue Arboretum, you can discover and map out the plants you would like to see using the Purdue Arboretum Explorer's "Create Your Own Tour" feature (<http://mlp.arboretum.purdue.edu/>), which works on both desktop computers and mobile devices.
- 2) **Collecting:** Follow your tour map to each of the plants you picked and collect your leaf specimens. Use plant ID books to identify the plant and make sure that you have arrived at the right one.
 - Label each specimen with a number after you have collected it; painter's tape and a marker work well for this.



- When gathering the samples for your collection, be mindful of the plants you are collecting from; do not gather more than you need or severely harm or damage the plant in the process.
- 3) **Pressing:** After you collect your samples, dry and preserve your leaves (or any other plant samples you collected, like fruit, seeds, or flowers) by pressing them with heavy books in a dry location for 1-2 weeks between cardboard and newspaper.
 - 4) **Mounting:** Once your leaves are dried and pressed, it is time to mount your leaves, preferably on cardstock, but regular paper will work too (it just won't be as sturdy).
 - You can use regular school glue and tape to apply the leaves to the cardstock or paper.
 - Make sure that when you attach your leaf samples, that you also apply a specimen page label with all of the appropriate information (see photo the photo on the next page for an example).

Specimen #3	
Common Name:	Paperbark Maple
Scientific Name (Genus and species):	<i>Acer griseum</i>
Latin Family Name:	Sapindaceae
Leaf Description:	Opposite and compound (trifoliate)
Date Collected:	7/25/2013
Location:	Southeast side of Horticulture Building
Description of Environment :	Sheltered from wind, moist soils, part shade/part sun
Collector's Name:	George Emmerson

5) **Organizing:** Put a page number on each leaf page and create a table of contents page.



6) **Putting It All Together:** Once the glue has dried on your mounted plant leaf specimens, insert your leaf sheets and table of contents page into plastic sleeves to protect them. Finally, put all of your pages together into a binder for a completed plant leaf ID collection!

