**Silver Maple** *Acer saccharinum* L.

Abundant in some localities, silver maple is a common tree, found throughout the state except along the coast. It grows largely on sandy banks along streams, usually attaining a height of 60–80 feet and a diameter of 2–3 feet. The trunk normally separates into 3 or 4 upright secondary stems, devoid of branches for some distance. The branches are long and slender, often pendulous.

The bark on young trees is smooth, gray, slightly tinged with red. On old trees, it is reddish-brown, furrowed, and separated into large thin scales that are loose at the bottom. Twigs are chestnut brown and shiny.

The leaves are opposite, deeply five-lobed; and the edges are irregular and sharply toothed. The upper surface is pale green, the lower, silvery white. They turn a pale yellow in fall.

In Maine, silver maple is most common along major rivers.
The flowers are on very short stalks and in clusters. They are greenish-yellow or sometimes pinkish, opening early, long before the leaves appear.

The fruit is paired, winged and ripens in spring. Frequently, one of the pair does not fully develop. The twigs are curved upward at the tip, orange or red-brown above and green below, slender, with a bitter taste and a rank odor when broken.

The wood is softer than that of the hard maple, close-grained, not durable and easily worked. It is used to a limited extent for pulp.

Silver maple has large globe-shaped flower buds and smaller vegetative buds.