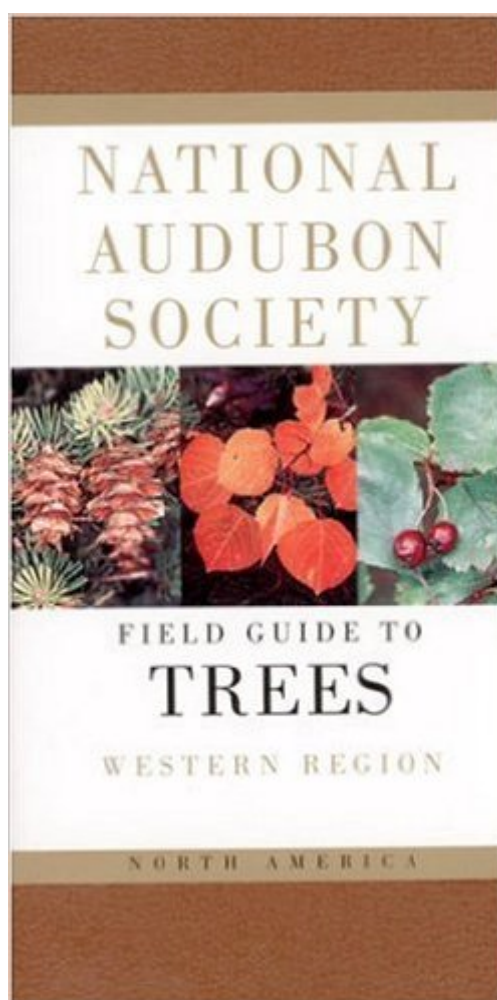


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# National Audubon Society Field Guide To North American Trees--W: Western Region (National Audubon Society Field Guides (Paperback))



## Synopsis

All 933 identification pictures are full-color photos of significant details of virtually all native trees and many cultivated species as you see them in their natural habitat.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This field guide is an excellent field to the trees typically found west of the continental divide of the United States and as far east as the Mississippi River. This guide includes photos and descriptions of the native trees of western North America, as well as common naturalized trees and a number of introduced species. Several rare subtropical species of the Mexican border region have been omitted. The front 1/2 of the book includes 537 photos of leaves and bark, flowers, and cones and fruit. The second 1/2 contains detailed descriptions of the 314 species presented in the front portion of the book. A detailed index including both common and scientific names is found in the rear of the book

If your going to be stuffing your field guide into your pocket, glove box, daypack or backpack, the "turtleback" binding used by Audubon is perfect. Personally, I don't use it that way. When I encounter a species I cannot identify, I take notes (usually of the mental variety) -- leaf characteristics, bark characteristics, size, form, habitat, seeds, flowers, etc. -- and identify it when I return home. The photos and drawings in this volume are generally excellent. So far as I can recall, the Audubon guide has yet to fail me. It doesn't include very many introduced (non-native) trees,

that's not its purpose, of course, so it may not help you identify the trees that have been planted in your yard. The Sunset Western Garden Book, or perhaps your local nurseryman, will fit that niche. Could the book be better? Well, the obvious answer is always yes, I suppose, but I don't know how. Would some kind of a 'flow-chart' for identifying specimens improve this edition? Well, there is one, created quite simply in the way the book is organized; refer to the "How to Use this Guide" section in the front. I won't claim to be a connoisseur of guidebooks, but this one has worked very nicely for me for several years and I recommend it without hesitation.

I think the main problem with this book is that it separates the pictures from the texts. What's more, it separates the pictures of leaves, flowers and fruits/nuts. This made it really time-consuming to find all the pictures and background of just one species... Imagine doing this in the field! How annoying it would be. Furthermore, perhaps because it's a book from last century, the printing of the text pages are not clear at all, my eyes hurt after reading it for more than 20 minutes. All in all, it's disappointing. Trust me! Don't buy this book!

I spent \$20 on this at a local bookstore (that was a mistake: it is only \$14 here on ) and got it home and went into my backyard. An hour later, I was only able to identify one of the three trees in the yard. I got the book because it had the Audobon name, and it included some sharp color photos. I should have got the Peterson guide instead. What the Audobon book is missing is an algorithm or process to identify an unknown tree (they call this "differential diagnosis" in medicine). I was expecting something like: "If it has 5 needles per cluster turn to page 45, if it has grey bark turn to page 64, etc" until you pinpoint your tree. I would even be happy if it had some illustrations like Silbey's bird book ... with arrows pointing to the discriminating features that distinguish the tree from similar trees. But in the Audobon book, the reader is expected to browse thru dozens of photos and try to match your tree to the photo. But SURPRISE, the photos of similar trees all look alike and what then? You are expected to browse the dense textual (!) descriptions and flip back and forth reading minutiae like "two white strips on the undersides of the needles" How about some color illustrations? How about a list of similar trees a given tree is often confused with? How about a handful of distinguishing characteristics of each tree? Try Peterson's book instead!

The Audubon Guide to Western Trees will prove a long lasting reference for outdoor lovers and tree finders. This easily equals the excellent Eastern Region guide in quality, detail, number of species listed, and beautiful photographs. However, if you want a heavy duty instant identification tool, hold

off on this and purchase the Peterson Guides to Trees. However, if you love to marvel at trees and identify them in any amount of time at all, buy this along with the Eastern Guide. The quality binding of this newly updated edition is nice quality, and easy to carry. The earlier, out of print, hardback Economy Press edition was bulky, but contained more species listings. Still that difference is hardly noticeable, and buy this edition at good costs. This guide, (compared to the Petersons) will please a patient outdoor searcher attempting to identify any tree they find. Though the Peterson Guide to Trees should be bought prior to this, it is still an excellent and reliable addition to your collection.

This book offers excellent photographs and very extensive information on trees. I use it often and have had great success identifying trees that otherwise I wouldn't know what they were. nicely organized and easy to use. The compact size is awesome for travelling and taking it hiking. Another great Audobon guide.

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