

Camp Bromelsick GPS Plant Trail Info

All GPS Coordinates in WGS 1984 datum

1. Red Mulberry

Scientific Name: *Morus rubra*

GPS 38.9435301, -95.3793095

This tree can grow to 30 to 50 feet tall and wide. Alternating leaves can be lobed and egg-shaped on the same tree. The edible berries ripen from late May through August and can be used raw or in pies and jams. Soak fruits weighted down in water to remove any pests from the berries before eating.



2. Persimmon

Scientific Name: *Diospyros virginiana*

GPS 38.9439478, -95.3787900

Female persimmon trees produce a sweet edible fruit. It is said that the seeds of the fruit can be cut in half to show a prediction of the upcoming winter. A shovel or spoon shaped white mark predicts a lot of snow, while a straight knife-shaped mark means icy weather awaits. A fork shape predicts a warm, dry winter.



3. Cottonwood

Scientific Name: *Populus deltoides*

GPS 38.9447474, -95.3794338

State tree of Kansas. This large tree grows in damp areas, often near rivers, creeks, and ponds. The heart shaped leaves are said to have inspired the triangle design for the tipis used by Lakota people. Deeply furrowed tan/grey bark. The inner bark was historically used for food (especially for animal feed) when other forage would run out in the winter.



4. Eastern Gramagrass

Scientific Name: *Tripsacum dactyloides*

GPS 38.9455423, -95.3836716

Eastern Gamagrass grows up to 8 feet tall in large clumps with short, thick, purplish rhizomes at the base. The wide hairless blades of the grass have a white rib up the middle. The 2-4 long flower spikes are each arranged with the male flowers at the top and the female flowers at the bottom of each one.

A close relative to corn, Eastern Gamagrass produces large teardrop shaped seeds, though the hull of the seed is especially hard. The seeds can be popped in the same manner as popcorn for eating. The grass is excellent livestock forage throughout the growing season, but also holds much potential for development as a perennial grain crop for human consumption.



5. Little Bluestem

Scientific Name: *Schizachyrium scoparium*

GPS 38.9444234 -95.3839366

Little bluestem is one of the most abundant grasses in Kansas. Its roots grow 5-8 feet deep, protecting it from drought. While still green, this grass is very nutritious for grazing animals. Little Bluestem is the State Grass of Kansas.



6. Sandbar Willow

Scientific Name: *Salix interior*

GPS 38.9439710, -95.3834850

Sandbar willow grows primarily in wet areas, such as pond and stream edges. The flexibility of willow has made it a favorite material for all kinds of basketry, weaving, and net making. The bark of another willow (*Salix alba*) is the original source of aspirin.



7. White Sage

Scientific Name: *Artemisia ludoviciana*

GPS 38.9433750, -95.3829105

While this sage is a different species than culinary sage, it can still be used as an aromatic spice in cooking. The plant has been used by many Native tribes for ceremonial and medicinal purposes, usually for purification. Modern chemistry has shown that *Artemisia* has potent medicinal compounds. *Artemisia* is particularly effective at treating for parasites in the body.



8. Kentucky Coffee Tree

Scientific Name: *Gymnocladus dioica*

GPS 38.9436490, -95.3817830

This tree is native to Kansas and grows to around 80 feet tall. The seeds are very toxic when raw, and should never be eaten fresh off the tree. However, Native Americans and early settlers roasted the seeds to make a coffee substitute. The beans do not contain caffeine. Native Americans also roasted the seeds for food.



9. Missouri gooseberry

Scientific Name: *Ribes missouriense*

GPS 38.944126, -95.379044

This thorny shrub produces an edible berry that ripens from green to almost black. Many Native American tribes made many use of the fresh or dried fruits. The astringent taste of the berries is produced by the tannins in the fruit, creating an immediate dry feeling in the mouth.



10. Indiangrass

Scientific Name: *Sorghastrum nutans*

GPS 38.947495, -95.382637

This warm-season grass can reach over 5 feet tall by the end of the summer. Indiangrass is a native grass that provides excellent summer forage, while being draught tolerant because of its deep roots. It also makes a nice showy ornamental grass in landscaping.



11. Switchgrass

Scientific Name: *Panicum virgatum*

GPS 38.947586, -95.383606

This native grass can grow to 7 feet tall. It provides habitat and food for native birds and small mammals. Switchgrass is the host plant for the Delaware Skipper caterpillar. This deep-rooted grass thrives in most environments and makes a striking ornamental plant, turning a flaming orange color in the fall.



12. Black Cherry

Scientific Name: *Prunus serotina*

GPS 38.9483780, -95.3845891

The shiny, round, dark purple fruits of this native tree are bittersweet, but edible if processed. One of the largest cherry trees, it can reach over 80 feet tall. The tree has many historical medicinal uses, such as cough medicine and cold remedies. The wood is highly valued for its use in high-end decorative furniture, instruments, cabinets, and other products.



13. Honey Locust

Scientific Name: *Gleditsia triacanthos*

GPS 38.949162, -95.385216

The timber from Honey Locust is dense and durable, making it a common material for fence posts, railroad ties, furniture, and tool handles. It also makes good fuel. Native tribes used the wood for bows, and other part of the tree were used for medicinal purposes. The dried seed pods were also ground to a pulp to use as a sweetener. These trees spread easily by their prolific seed production and tend to be weedy. The trunk and branches of Honey Locust are often covered in long, sharp three-pronged thorns, making them undesirable in many areas.



14. Black Locust

Scientific Name: *Robinia pseudoacacia*

GPS 38.943581, -95.372871

Black Locust is native to the southeastern United States, but has aggressively invaded Kansas and other parts of North America and been introduced to other parts of the world. Black Locust has far fewer thorns than Honey Locust, with just two thorns at the base of each compound leaf. The trees spread by sending up root suckers that can grow into full trees, often choking out all other species in an area.

Black locust wood is extremely hard and durable, making it an excellent material for outdoor applications such as fence posts.



15. American Elm

Scientific Name: *Ulmus americana*

GPS 38.9440211, -95.3733160

This classic American shade tree can reach up to 130 feet tall, but many mature trees die from Dutch elm disease before growing to such heights. Before the first outbreaks of Dutch elm disease in North America, these trees were commonly known to grow for over 300 years. The American Elm has smooth leaves, distinguishing it from Slippery Elm, which has rough leaves.



16. Red Cedar

Scientific Name: *Juniperus virginiana*

GPS 38.9428390, -95.3738147

Cedar was burned as ritual and purification incense by some Native tribes. Eastern red cedars, a type of Juniper tree, are native to Kansas, but they have become an aggressive invader of grasslands in the state due to the suppression of large-scale prairie fires which used to clear most of these trees away when they were still small. They can also quickly overrun disturbed areas such as abandoned cropland and overgrazed pastures. Eastern red cedar trees consume more water from the soil than typical prairie vegetation, which can contribute to dry conditions. They are also highly flammable, because their foliage contains volatile oils. These factors combined can contribute to the risk of uncontrollable wild-fires if cedars are allowed to overtake other native vegetation.



17. Buckbrush

Scientific Name: *Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*

GPS 38.942905, -95.374794

Also called “coralberry,” this shrub grows to approximately 4 feet tall in the understory of wooded areas and will sometimes grow in disturbed prairies. The attractive pink berries stay on the plant from fall throughout the winter. Buckbrush provides good cover habitat for wildlife and is a favorite food for deer, robins and bobwhites.



18. Osage-orange

Scientific Name: *Maclura pomifera*

GPS 38.9433472, -95.3753471

Also called “hedge apple,” these trees have been used as living fences on farms. Their incredibly hard wood also burns extremely hot, to the point of being hazardous in indoor fireplaces. The tree is named for the Osage tribe, who lived within the native range of the trees. The fruit also has a citrus aroma when it is ripe. Only the female trees produce fruit, which can be up to 6 inches across. The seeds within the fruit are a favorite food for squirrels, but few humans have the patience to harvest them out of the sticky, slimy pulp.



19. Poison Ivy

Scientific Name: *Toxicodendron radicans*

GPS 38.9437715, -95.3760814

Thin stems with clusters of 3 slightly lobed leaves. Red berries provide food for birds. Leaves can be red-brown to light yellow-green to dark green. Grows below trees and where other slight cover is available. Oils from stems, vines, roots, and leaves cause minor to severe itchy rashes. Reactions can be serious if exposure is extreme, plant is accidentally ingested, or if smoke from burning plants is inhaled.



20. Black Walnut

Scientific Name: *Juglans nigra*

GPS 38.9436565, -95.3757955

This native tree grows tall and narrow up to and sometimes over 75 feet. It produced an edible hard shelled nut encased in a tough green husk that turns darker when ripe.



Walnuts are a very valuable food crop. The hardwood from this tree is highly coveted for furniture, gunstocks, and veneer. The husks produce a strong dye that can range from red to almost black. Many other species of plant cannot grow under these trees due to a chemical they excrete into the soil.

The scientific study of the traditional knowledge and customs of a people concerning plants and their medical, religious, food, fiber, and other uses is called ***Ethnobotany***.

Suggested Reading about uses of plants:

Medicinal Wild Plants of the Prairie: An Ethnobotanical Guide by Kelly Kindscher, 1992.

Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie: An Ethnobotanical Guide by Kelly Kindscher, 1987.

Edible Wild Plants: Eastern/Central North America (Peterson Field Guides), 1999

Peterson Field Guide to Medicinal Plants and Herbs of Eastern and Central North America, 2014

A Peterson Field Guide to Western Medicinal Plants and Herbs, 2002