

LOOK AGAIN !

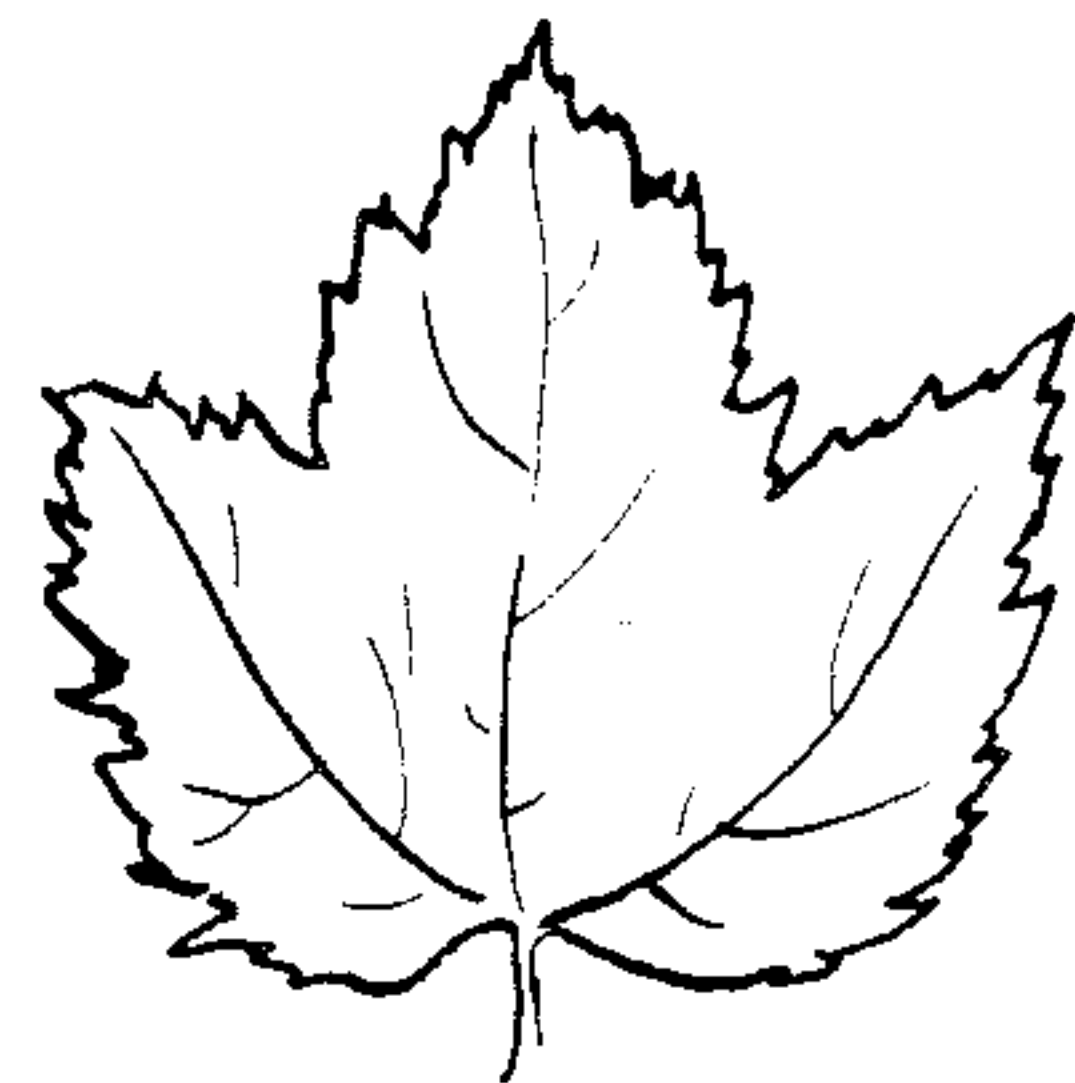
Shuffling through the woods on a bright October day, few of us can resist picking up a fallen leaf here and there. Not only are we fascinated by the sudden change from restful but monotonous green to riotous reds and yellows, but we seem more acutely aware than before of their distinctive shapes.

Try to guess what leaf will catch the eye before any other, and it probably will turn out to be a Red Maple--partly due to its brilliant coloring, but also because its five-lobed form has somehow become for us moderns a symbolic representation of a leaf, much as that of the acanthus was for the ancients. (It is interesting to speculate whether Canada's selection of it for its flag was cause or effect.)



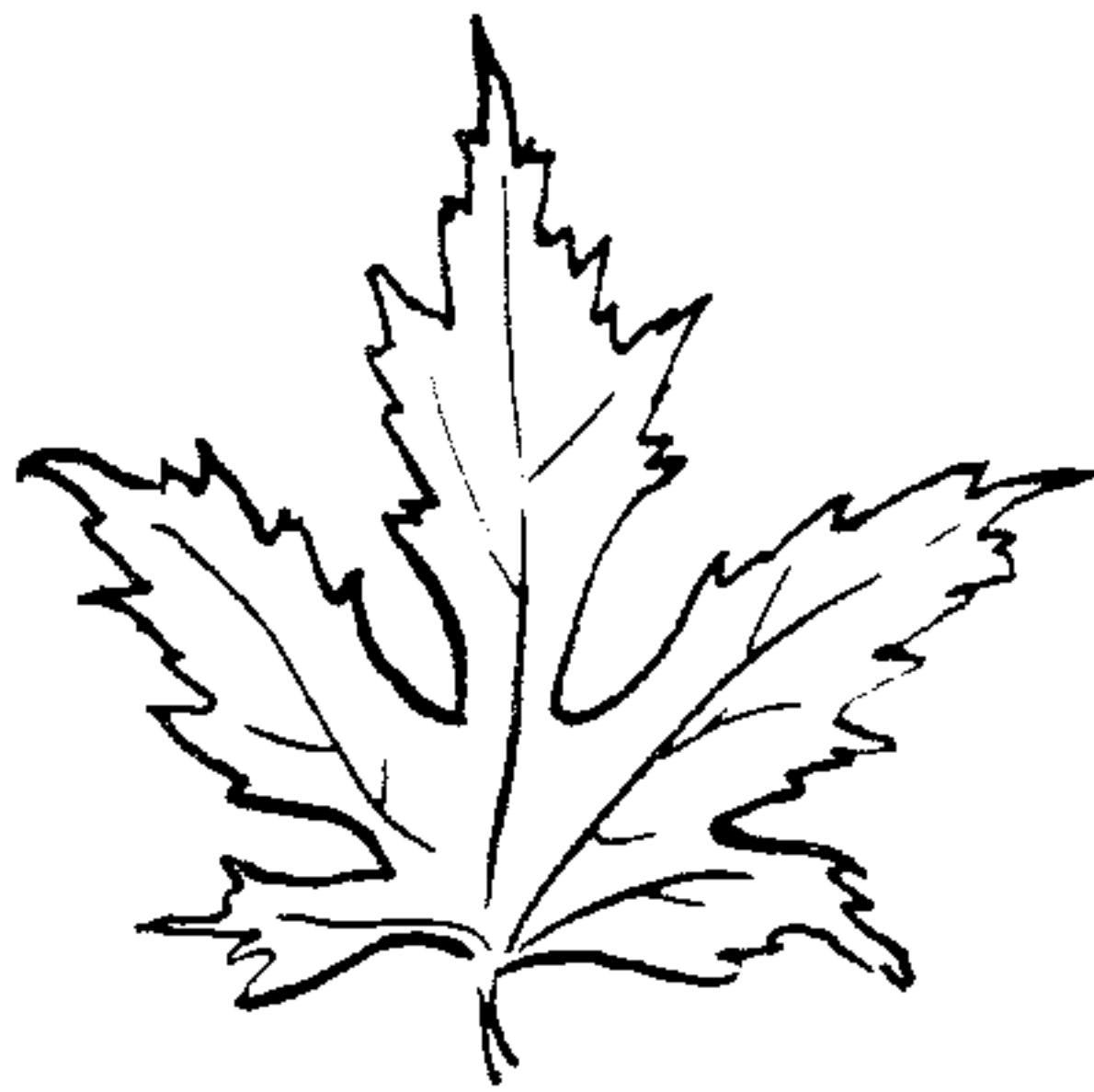
ACER RUBRUM

We are thinking here of the typical Red Maple, or Acer rubrum. There is a three-lobed form, more common in the South than northward, that is sometimes distinguished as var. trilobum, but the ones that resemble it even more closely belong to other species: Silver Maple (A. saccharinum) and Sugar Maple (A. saccharum).

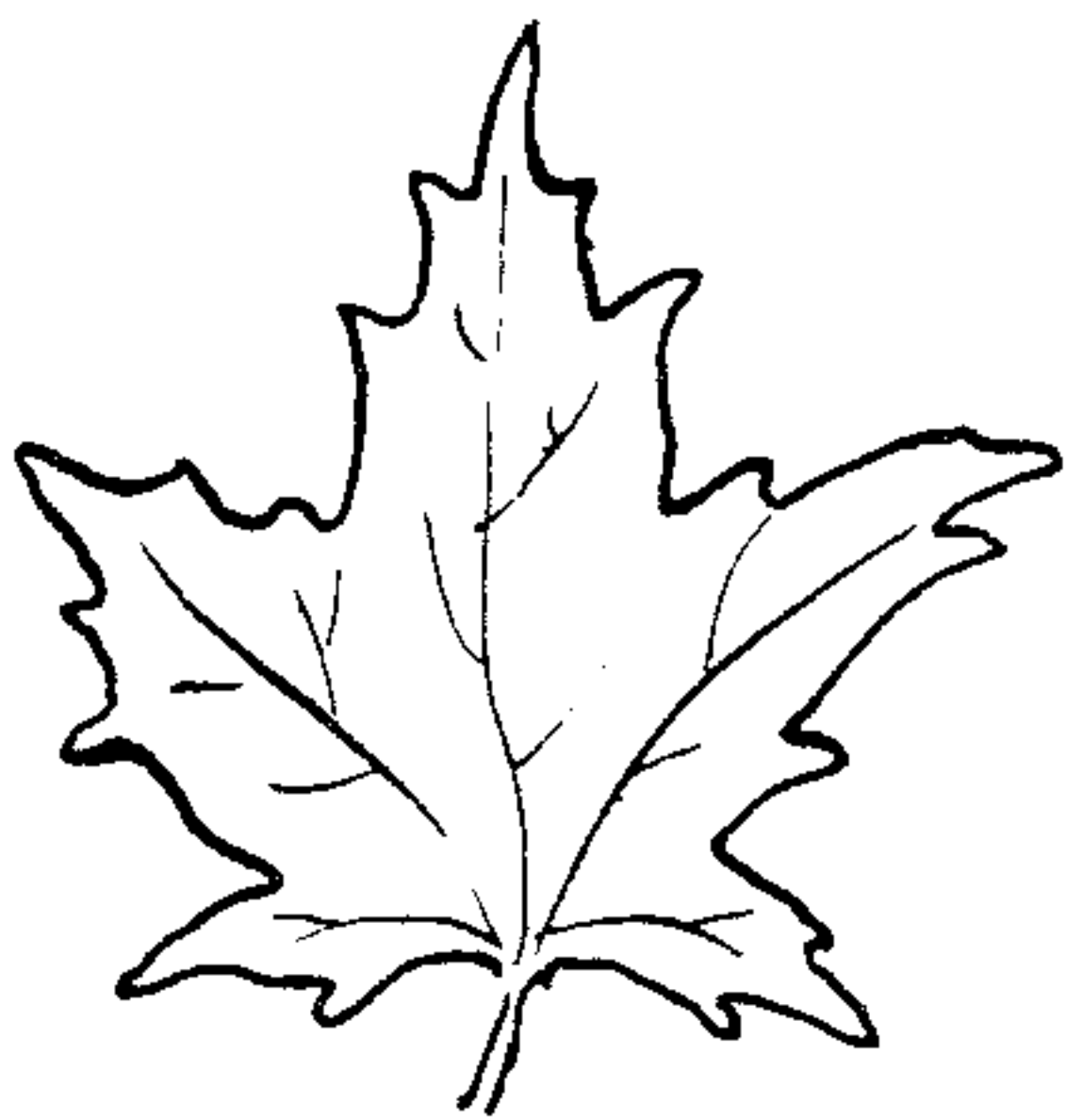


VAR. TRILOBUM

In Silver Maple, the principal differences are that the leaves are whitish beneath (accounting for the common name), and that the sinuses are much deeper so that the sides of the middle lobe taper inward toward the base. Also, they turn pale yellow in the fall, never achieving the vivid hues for which Red Maple is noted.



A. SACCHARINUM



A. SACCHARUM

Sugar Maple leaves are intermediate between the other two in that the sides of the center lobe are nearly parallel, and the teeth are large and very few. Their typical autumn color is a rich yellow-orange.

Dick Smith