

EXERCICE N°3 : « Autumnal tints »

I formerly thought that it would be worth the while to get a specimen leaf from each changing tree, shrub, and herbaceous plant, when it had acquired its brightest characteristic color, in its transition from the green to the brown state, outline it, and copy its color exactly, with paint, in a book, which should be entitled " October, or Autumnal Tints," - beginning with the earliest reddening woodbine and the lake of radical leaves, and coming down through the maples, hickories, and sumachs, and many beautifully freckled leaves less generally known, to the latest oaks and aspens. What a memento such a book would be! You would need only to turn over its leaves to take a ramble through the autumn woods whenever you pleased . Or if I could preserve the leaves themselves, unfaded, it would be better still . I have made but little progress toward such a book, but I have endeavored, instead, to describe all these bright tints in the order in which they present themselves.

Henry David Thoreau, *Autumnal Tints*, October 1862

On the occasion of the various visits of parks, gardens and arboretums, we are going to pay attention to the leaves as elements of identification of the tree, and foliages for their ornamental qualities (texture, coloration, mobility, transparency, etc.). The Parc Floral de Paris and the arboretum of Châtenay-Malabry are very good place to particularly observe of autumn colors.

The tools of investigation and study are the photography, the drawing and the watercolor or gouache, and the collection of leaves to dry for the constitution of a herbarium.

This exercise is a teamwork (maximum of three students).

The document to be done consists in a herbarium of leaves which will contain, for about ten trees belonging to different species, the following elements:

- a global view of the tree in its context
- a closer view of the foliage
- a view of one or more leaves showing the shape of the leaf and how it fits on the branch
- at least one leaf (several if variable sizes and colors are found) collected at the ground (the arboretum rules prohibit any picking on the plants) that will have to be scanned (if not photographed) on both sides
- a view of the tag identifying the tree
- description of the tree taken from a guide that will be referenced
- a personal commentary on the qualities of the tree.

If you observe fruits, buds, or bark on the tree that may help with identification, or having interesting ornamental qualities, do not hesitate to add them to your work.

The trees studied should be located on the plane of the arboretum. It will be necessary to indicate the date of the visit.

► **Work to be returned on January 14th, 2019** (by e-mail)

NOTES:

If you want to preserve the collected leaves, if possible with their colors, you have to dry them quickly and to protect them from the light.

When you collect the leaves, the best is to immediately put them between sheets of an absorbent paper (like newspaper) inside a portfolio.



Arriving at home you have to renew the paper, and so 24 hours later, and then every too days. These papers with the leaves must be placed under a pile of books which will act as a press, all being installed in a dry place and at the same time sheltered from the light.

You can also constitute a virtual herbarium by scanning the leaves as quickly as possible: it is important to always scan with the same settings. Don't forget to place on the glass, near to the leaves, a graduated ruler: so your picture will have a graphic scale, and it allows you to compare several leaves.

Always scan the top and bottom of the leaf.

