Wood Thrush Wilderness LLC

Birch Bark Basket

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MATERIALS:
BIRCH BARK
BRAIDED GRASS
SINEW
OPTIONAL: WOODEN BASE
TOOLS:
COTHES PINS OR CLAMPS, PENCIL, TAPE MEASURE, CONTAINER FOR SOAKING BARK, DRILL, SCISSORS, AWL OR LEATHER HOLE PUNCH



WHITE OR PAPER BRCH
Identify tree. Use books or other resources.

GENERAL CHARISTICS OF BIRCH TREES

- ❑ LENTICELS – horizontal lines. Birches are mostly light-colored white, yellow, or grayish bark that often separates into thin papery plates and is characteristically marked with long horizontal dark raised lines.
- ❑ SAMARA which is the birch fruit small—a small seed with papery wings.
- ❑ CLUMPS - Many types of birch grow in clumps of two to four closely spaced separate trunks.
- ❑ DOUBLE TOOTHED LEAVES – All North American birches have double-toothed leaves and are yellow and showy in the fall.
- ❑ BARK WITH LAYERS - Birches also have bark that more readily layers into segments.
- ❑ PIONEER SPECIES - they tend to colonize in open, grassy areas, such as spaces cleared by forest fire or abandoned areas.
- ❑ SWEET SAP - This can be collected in the Spring reduced into syrup and was once used as birch beer. This is done after Maple Sugar season. 1 gallon of syrup for every 110 gallons of sap. Unlike the Sugar Maple which is 1:40

GENERAL INFORMATION

- In its native environment, it can be found in forest borders across the northern and central U.S.
- Its bark is dark when the tree is young, but quickly develops the bright white bark that easily in layers.
- The species grows to about 60 feet tall.
- It is relatively short-lived.
- It is susceptible to boring insects.

BEFORE COLLECTION

- Landowners' permission. There is permission for gathering on Maine Public Land. Please know the regulations prior to gathering.
- Collect from down birch trees. Collecting from live trees will impact the health of the tree.

COLLECTION

- Collect from trees that have less dark gray and black spots.
- Use a knife to cut.
- Slowly peal bark back.
- Do this in temperatures above freezing.



This would not work as a good example of what to



PREPARING THE BARK

1. Soak the BARK in water for 10 -20 minutes
2. Clean bark by using a wet cloth.

MAKING THE BASKET

- Gather all supplies and tools needed.
- Cut bark to size preference. Bark should overlap at least 1-2”
- Form to the size you want to make and hold with clothes pins.
- Mark with pencil or marker where you want to add holes. ¼” above the bottom. Holes should be no more than 1” apart from each other.
- Mark where the ark overlaps. The holes should be about 1” apart from each other.

- Prepare your needle with sinew. Tie sinew to needle using an overhand knot. Tie a knot at the end of your sinew.

- Sew bark together where it overlaps. Start in the inside bottom once you have reached the hop with your straight r diagonal stitch then return and follow the stitch back to reinforce.

- Then start to work on the bottom of the basket. Begin in the inside of the basket going down into the bottom hole and then out and around to the hole in the bark.

- Add your rim (use seagrass or other plant)



Note this is just a brief overview of the material and direction that was in class.

We hope you have fun making your basket. Let me know if you have any questions. We are your resource for making baskets.

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