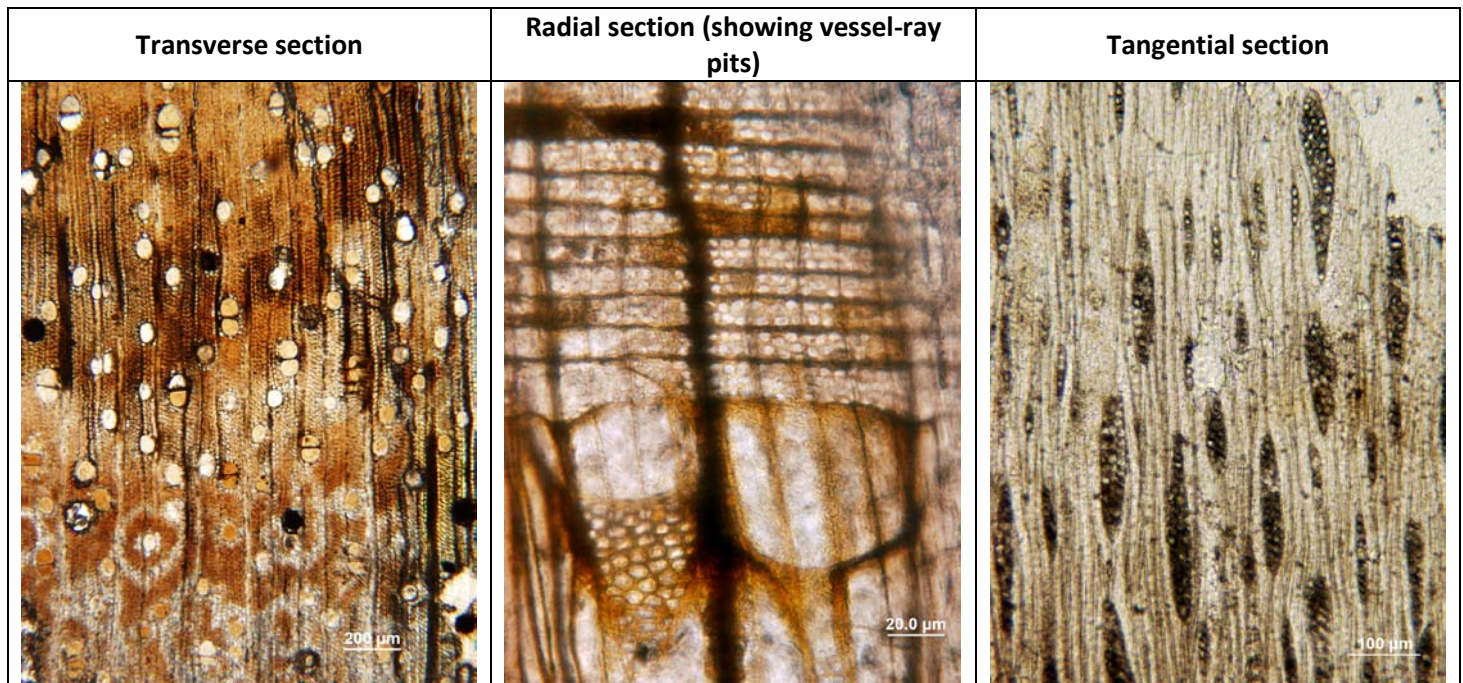


## ***Acer puratanum* (maple)**

Family: Sapindaceae

Naming reference: Prakash, U. & Barghoorn, E.S. 1961. Miocene fossil woods from the Columbia basalts of central Washington, I. Journal of the Arnold Arboretum XLII, 165-199

Other reference: Wheeler, E.A. & Dillhoff, T.A. 2009. The Middle Miocene wood flora of Vantage, Washington, USA. IAWA Journal, Supplement 7. 101p.



Photos courtesy Dr. E.A. Wheeler

**Diagnostic features:** Distinct growth rings and diffuse porous vessel arrangement. Vessels solitary (~25%) and in radial multiples of up to four or more. Solitary vessels are typically oval. Perforation plates simple with helical thickenings along the length of vessel elements. Rays 1-4(5) seriate, mostly 3-4, homocellular, tending toward fusiform shape. Axial parenchyma are rare. Crystals are absent from axial parenchyma strands.

**Discussion:** Four different species of fossil maple have been described from wood deposits of the Columbia River Basalts. This particular species is one of three that fall into the 'soft maple' group with narrower rays. This species is separated from the other two soft maples by its lower proportion of solitary vessels, rays commonly 3-4 seriate that tend towards fusiform or irregular shape, and the absence of crystals from axial parenchyma strands.

Beck (1945) listed maple as a common element of the Umtanum, Yakima Canyon, and Vantage wood assemblages. It has also been reported from Yakima Ridge and Squaw Creek/Badger Pocket. Fossilized maple leaves and seeds are commonly found in Cenozoic floras throughout the Pacific Northwest, and there are still several species native to the area today.



*Acer stockeyae* – a fossil maple fruit (samara) from the Eocene One Mile Creek flora of British Columbia