



# The Need for Trees

Trees are an essential part of our environment! They are important to other plants, fungi, wildlife, and people and provide countless benefits, such as oxygen, shelter, and food. In this adventure, you'll learn to identify six of the most common trees found in the park.

Remember to stay on the trail and leave no trace. For your safety, look out for other plants, like poison oak or ivy, that may be climbing up the tree!



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All trees start out as seeds that will sprout into seedlings.

A sapling is the next stage of a tree's life. Seedlings become saplings when they reach four feet tall.

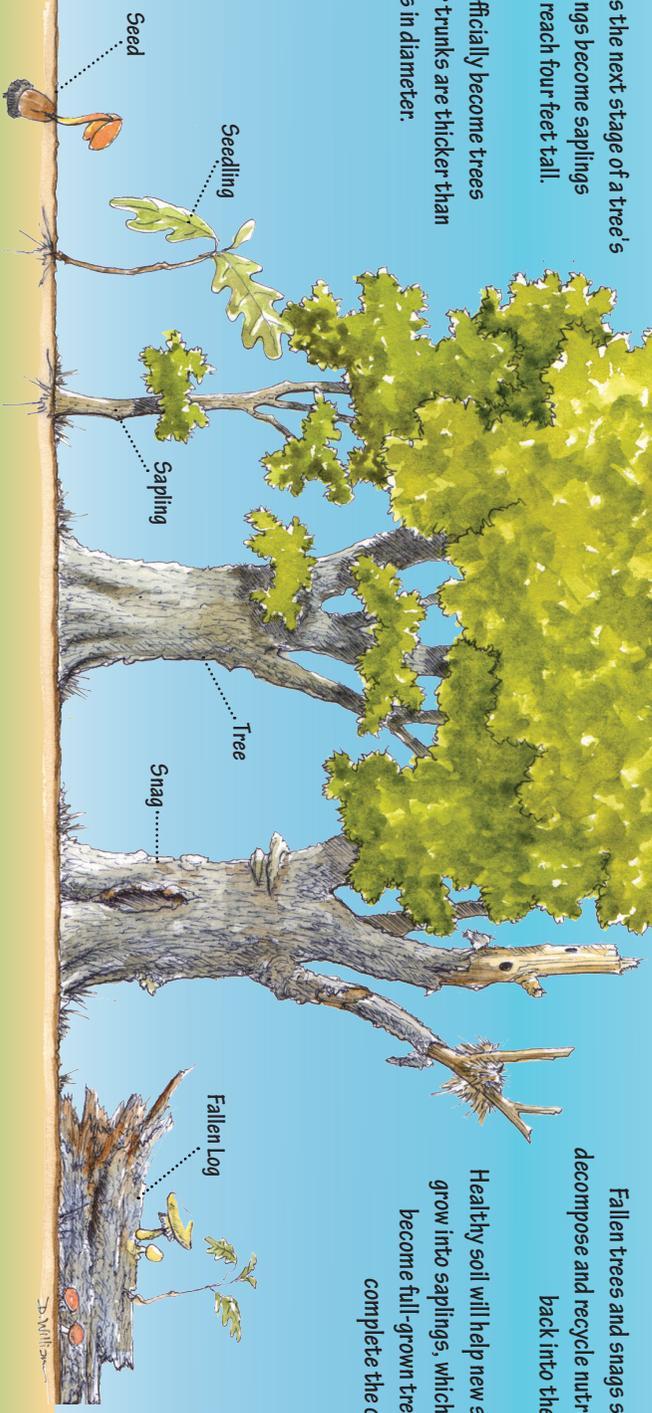
Saplings officially become trees when their trunks are thicker than four inches in diameter.

## Tree Life Cycle

When a tree dies, it sometimes becomes a snag, which is a dead tree that hasn't fallen.

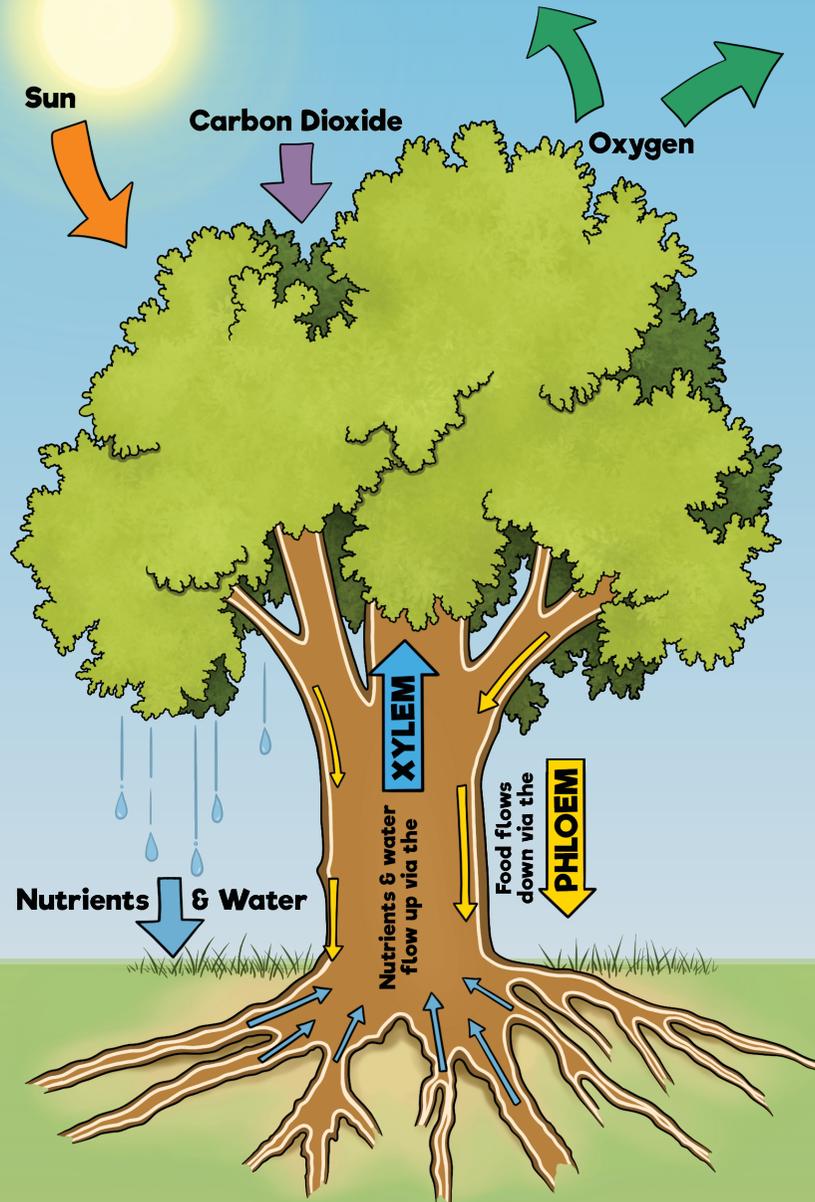
Fallen trees and snags slowly decompose and recycle nutrients back into the soil.

Healthy soil will help new seeds grow into saplings, which then become full-grown trees to complete the cycle.



Can you find a... Seed? \_\_\_ Seedling? \_\_\_ Sapling? \_\_\_ Tree? \_\_\_ Snag? \_\_\_ Fallen Log? \_\_\_

# The Need to Know How Trees Grow



Most plants make their own food through a process known as **photosynthesis**. This occurs when nutrients and water flow up from the roots via the xylem and combine with carbon dioxide and sunlight absorbed in the leaves. This chemical reaction produces **oxygen**, which is released into the air, and **glucose**, a type of sugar, that is dispersed throughout the rest of the tree via the phloem.

## ● Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)



This evergreen conifer spans 300 feet high and lives up to 1,000 years old. It has soft, flat needles that whirl around the branches and a very thick bark, making it extremely fire-resistant. The tree provides food and shelter for countless wildlife. Indigenous tribes used the plant to make medicine, tea, canoes, and buildings. It is one of the best timber-producing species and heavily used in construction.

## ● Red Alder (*Alnus rubra*)



Reaching 100 feet tall, the red alder has smooth, gray bark, often covered in moss and lichen, and oval, toothed leaves. In the spring, it produces both long, red male catkins and cone-like, female catkins that flower. Animals consume every part of the tree. Native Americans used this plant to create masks, bowls, tools, dyes, and medicine. The wood is used for furniture production and smoking fish.

## ● Bigleaf Maple (*Acer macrophyllum*)



The bigleaf maple is a medium-sized tree with gray bark and large, palmate leaves (resembling a hand). The foliage and winged samaras, or seedpods, are eaten by rodents, deer, and birds. Native Americans used various parts of the tree to make food, syrup, baskets, dishware, canoe paddles, and other supplies. Musical instruments and furniture veneers are made from the wood.

## ● Oregon Oak (*Quercus garryana*)



The Oregon oak, with deeply furrowed bark and green, lobed leaves, lives up to 500 years old. The acorns are eaten by wildlife, and Native Americans used them to make flour. This oak spreads well after disturbances, like fire, and is a vital species in bunchgrass prairies and oak woodlands. Since a large majority were logged in the 20th century, conservation efforts focus on preserving their ecosystems.

## ● Western Redcedar (*Thuja plicata*)



This evergreen conifer grows over 200 feet tall and is distinguished by its scale-like needles. Living well over 1,000 years, western redcedars provide food and shelter for a wide range of wildlife. Many indigenous people of the Pacific Northwest deemed it the Tree of Life since it provided everything they needed. It is highly rot resistant and the preferred choice for outdoor construction.

## ● Beaked Hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta*)



The beaked hazelnut is a small, shade-tolerant tree with smooth, gray bark and round, double-toothed leaves. The husk-covered fruit resembles a beak, and the nuts are loved among wildlife. Native Americans used many parts of the tree - making medicinal tinctures, trading nuts, and building baskets, fish traps, and other tools. It is used today in restoration planting to increase biodiversity.