



# 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!



Thanks for joining us today!



Visit our website to find more TRACK Trail™ adventures near you!

## FOLLOW US!



@KidsInParks



@KidsInParksBRPF



Kids in Parks is a program of the

TRACK Trail Partners:



**MEDFORD**  
PARKS, RECREATION AND FACILITIES



**OREGON PARKS  
FOREVER**

TRACK your hike at  
[kidsinparks.com](http://kidsinparks.com)  
and get **FREE** prizes!

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.

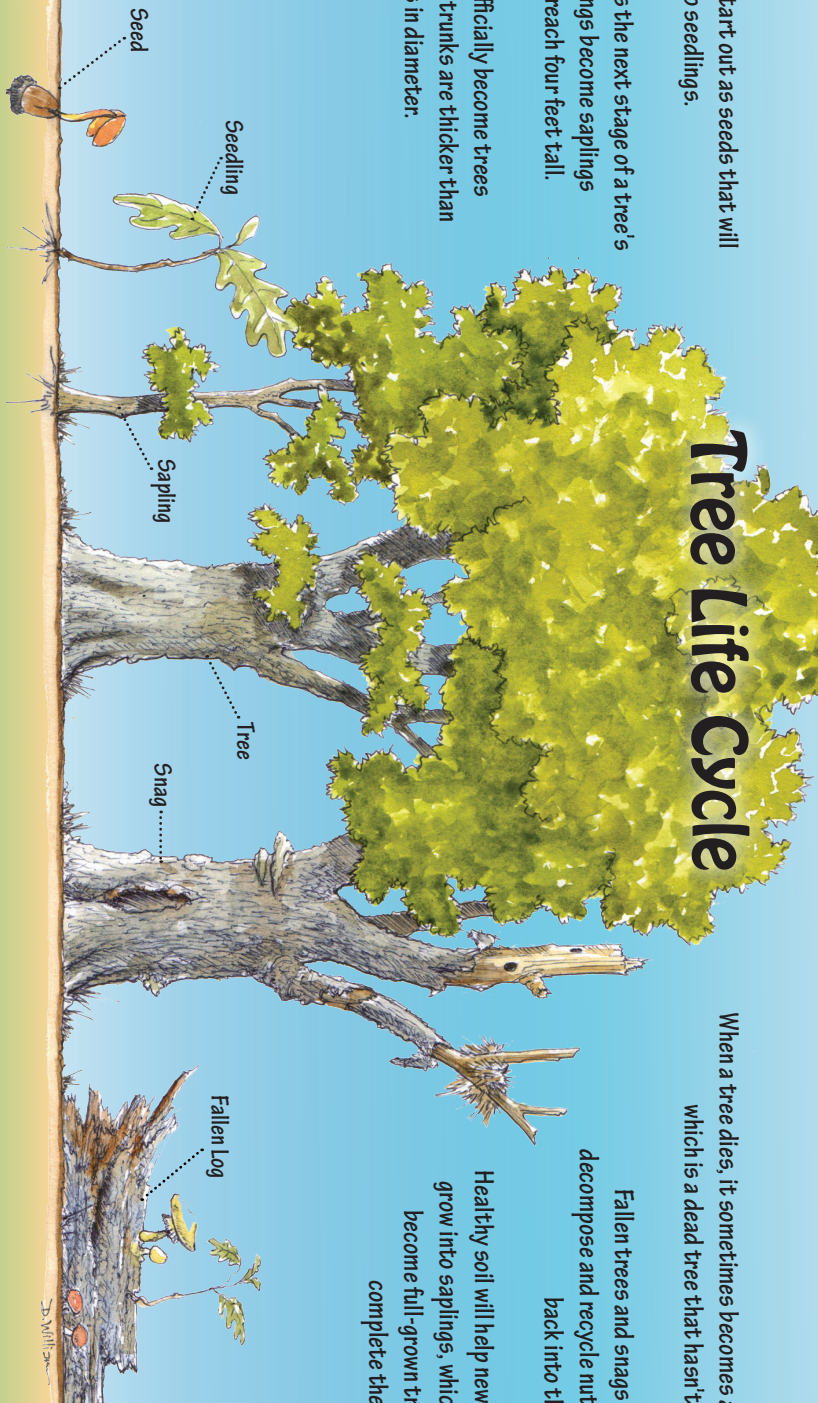
Saplings officially become trees when their trunks are thicker than four inches in diameter.

## 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?



## ● Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)



Douglas firs are true forest giants! These tall, evergreen trees have thick bark, soft flat needles that spiral around the branches, and cones with little “mouse tails” sticking out. They provide food and shelter for all kinds of animals, from birds and squirrels to tiny insects. Long ago, Indigenous tribes used Douglas fir for medicine, tea, canoes, and even homes.

## ● Ponderosa Pine (*Pinus ponderosa*)



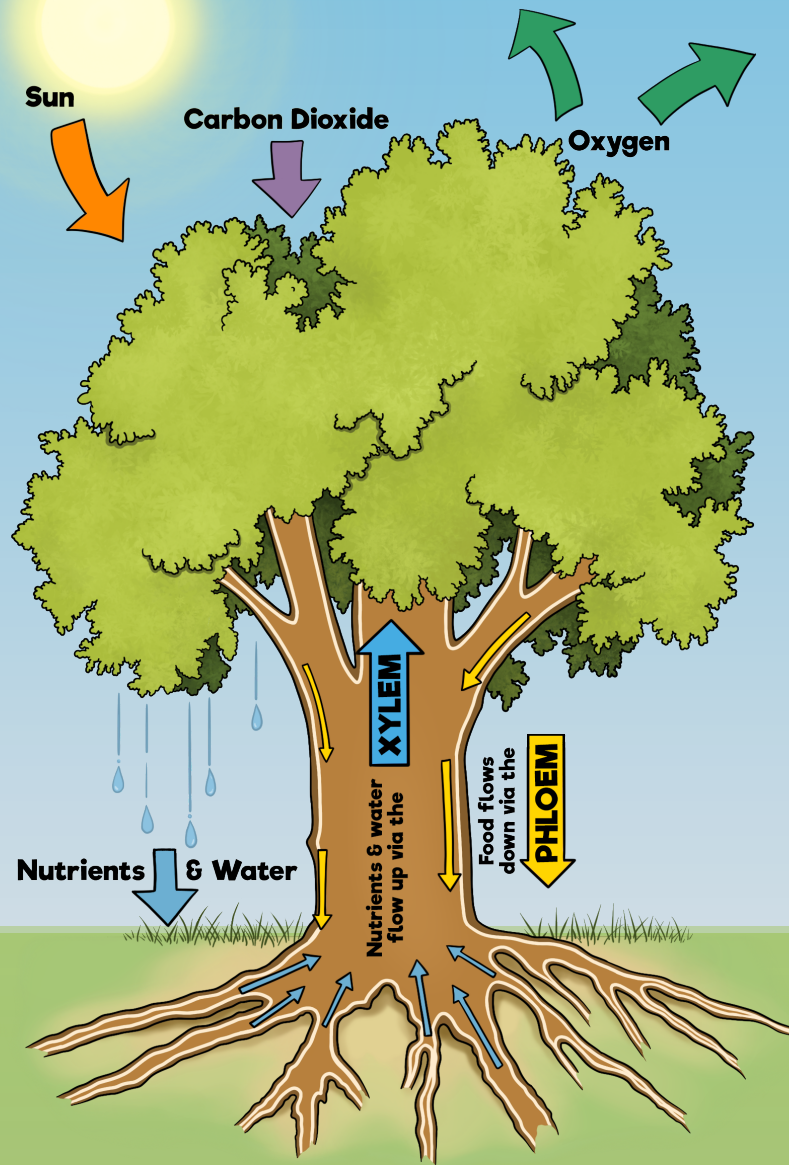
Ponderosa pines are towering trees with yellowish-orange bark that smells sweet—like vanilla or butterscotch! Their long needles grow in bundles of two or three, and their big cones are prickly to the touch. Lots of animals, like woodpeckers, chipmunks, and owls, live in and around these trees. Today, people use their wood to build houses, furniture, and even make musical instruments.

## ● Pacific Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*)



With its smooth, reddish bark that peels like paper, the Pacific Madrone looks like it belongs in a fairy tale! Its leathery, evergreen leaves and clusters of white flowers make it easy to spot in spring and summer. Birds and other wildlife love its berries and use its twisting branches for shelter. Indigenous peoples used its bark and leaves for medicine, and today its strong wood is used for furniture.

# 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.

## ● California Black Oak (*Quercus kelloggii*)



Even though “California” is in their name, California Black Oaks grow in southwest Oregon. Their deeply lobed leaves are sharper than other oaks, and they burst with color in the fall, showing off shades of yellow, orange, and red! Their acorns are a favorite food source for deer, bears, birds, and insects. Native peoples enjoyed their acorns too—roasting and grinding them into flour.

## ● Oregon White Oak (*Quercus garryana*)



Oregon white oaks are strong, slow-growing trees that can live for centuries! Their thick bark is rugged and gray, and their rounded-lobed leaves turn golden in the fall. Birds, squirrels, deer, and even rare butterflies rely on these oaks for food and shelter. People have used their tough wood for tools and furniture, and Indigenous communities gathered their acorns for food.

## ● Whiteleaf Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos viscida*)



Although technically a shrub, Whiteleaf Manzanitas are too cool to leave out of the brochure. Their silvery-green leaves can rotate on their stems to hide from the hot sun, helping them survive dry summer days! In Spanish, “manzana” means “apple,” and the suffix “-ita” means “little,” which is what their small, round berries resemble. Birds and mammals enjoy these “little apples” every summer / fall.