



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.

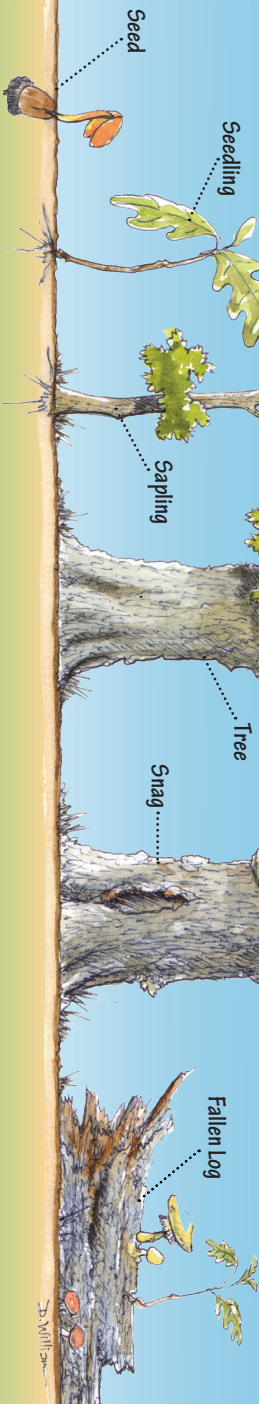
Saplings officially become trees when their trunks are thicker than four inches in diameter.

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?

● **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*)



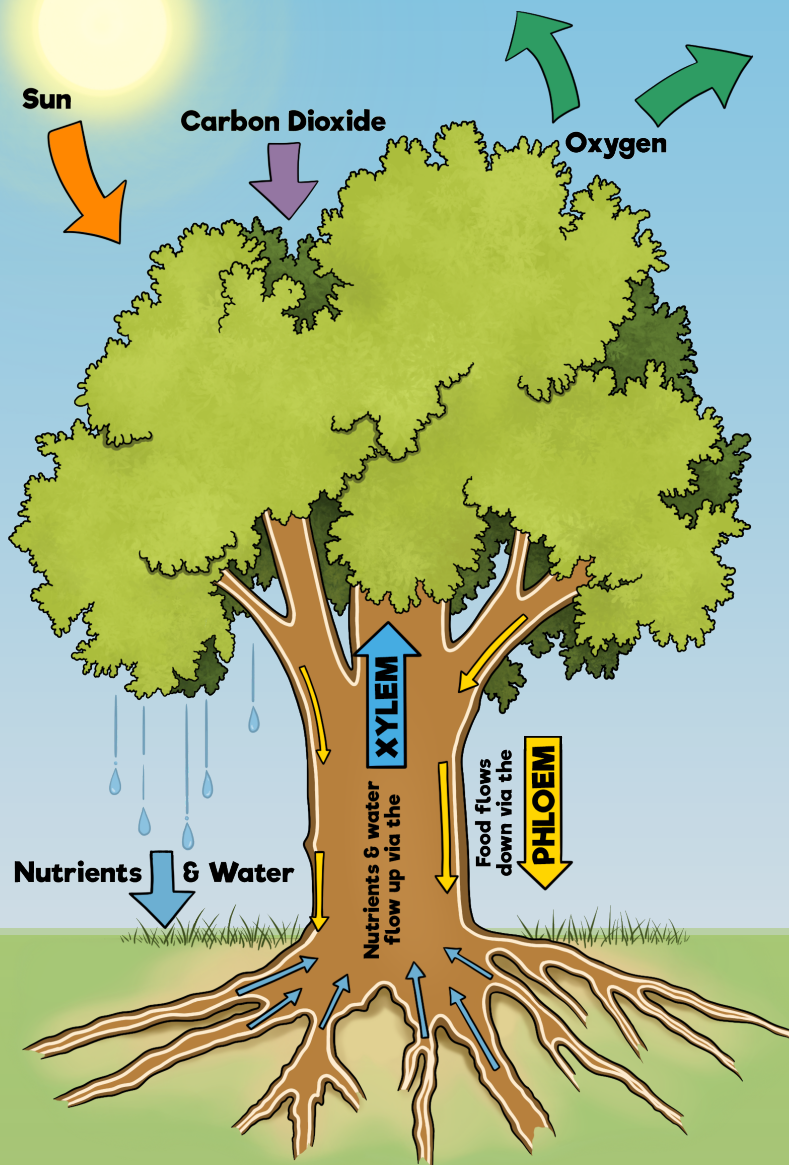
Ponderosa pines are towering trees with yellowish-orange bark that smells sweet—like vanilla or butterscotch! Their long needles grow in bundles of two or three, and their big cones are prickly to the touch. Lots of animals, like woodpeckers, chipmunks, and owls, live in and around these trees. Today,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

● **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.

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.

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



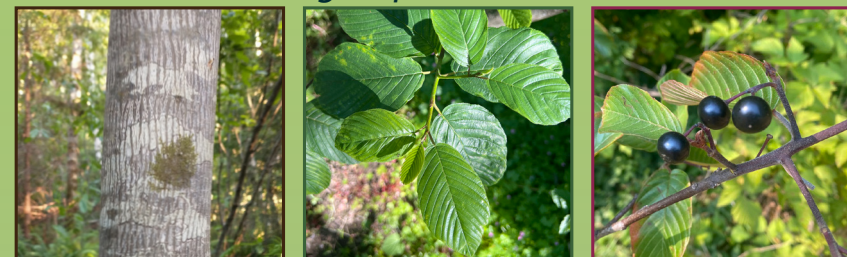
Oregon white oaks are strong, slow-growing trees that can live for centuries! Their thick bark is rugged and gray, and their rounded-lobed leaves turn golden in the fall. Birds, squirrels, deer, and even rare butterflies rely on these oaks for food and shelter. People have used their tough wood for tools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

● **Oregon Ash** (*Fraxinus latifolia*)



The Oregon ash is a cool, leafy tree that loves to grow near rivers, lakes, and wetlands. Its bark is gray and furrowed like an old puzzle, and its compound leaves have 5 to 9 leaflets that turn bright yellow in the fall. Oregon ash trees help stop floods, keep rivers clean, and give homes to frogs, birds, bugs, and more! People use their strong, springy wood to make tools, flooring, and even baseball bats.

● **Cascara** (*Frangula purshiana*)



The Cascara is a large shrub or small tree that grows in the Northwest. It has smooth silver-gray bark that is splotchy in appearance (often from lichen growth), shiny green leaves with curved veins, and small black berries that ripen in late summer / early fall. Birds, black bears, and raccoons enjoy the berries. Long ago, indigenous peoples dried the bark and used it to make medicine for stomach aches.