

## White Oak



The leaves of the white oak have rounded lobes, and the bark is light gray and scaly on older trees. The acorns are elongated with a shallow cup, and have a sweet taste, which makes them a preferred food of deer, bear, turkeys, squirrels and other wildlife. Because of the water-tight quality of the wood, white oak was valued in olden times for shipbuilding, and is still used today to make barrels.

## Bald Cypress



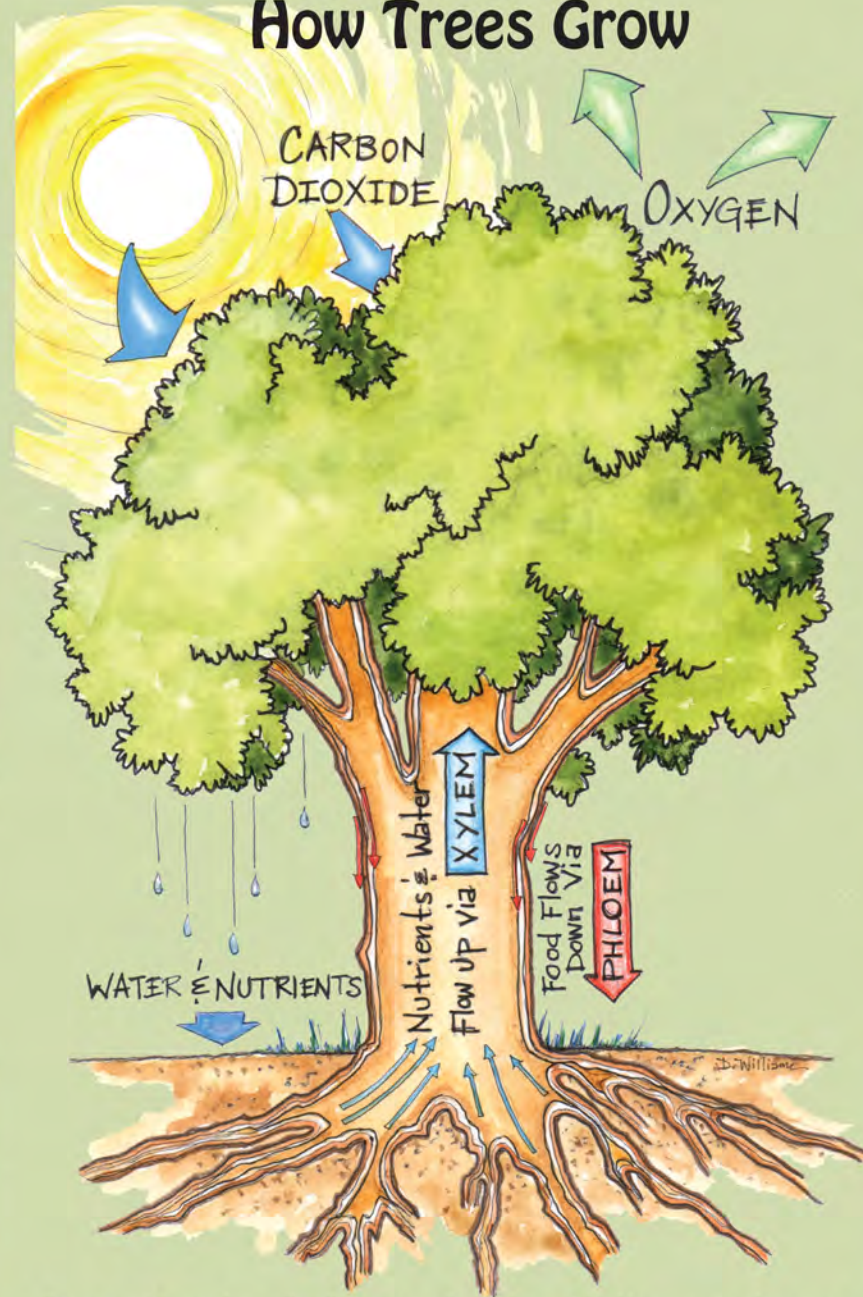
Bald cypress trees have stringy, reddish bark with ridges in a criss-cross pattern. Many have a wide trunk base for stability in floods. They are called "bald" cypress because unlike other conifers (cone-bearing trees), they shed their leaves each winter. Unique to cypress trees, "knees" are roots that have grown upward above the ground to help the trees breathe and anchor them in wet soil.

## American Holly



As you walk down the trail, look for the sharp, spiny, evergreen leaves of the American holly. It is also known as the Christmas holly because the red fruits appear in winter and are used for Christmas decorations. If eaten, their berries can make people very sick but are a valuable winter food source for deer and a variety of bird species.

# The Need to Know How Trees Grow



Plants and trees have the ability to make their own food in a process known as photosynthesis. They do this by sucking water and nutrients from the soil up through their xylem and into their leaves. The water and nutrients are combined with carbon dioxide and sunlight to make a sugary food called glucose. This food then travels down through the phloem to the rest of the tree, so it can grow.

Illustrations by David Williams, Wingin' it Works

## Flowering Dogwood



The flowering dogwood is a small tree that is abundant throughout the eastern United States. The bark of a dogwood has small cubic plates. The white "petals" of the dogwood flower are actually sepals (modified leaves), while the true flowers are the small yellow clusters in the middle. The buds look like gray-green chocolate chips. Dogwood trees were historically used to create quinine - a fever reducer.

## Red Maple



Able to grow in almost any soil condition, the red maple is one of the most abundant and widespread trees in eastern North America. With red twigs, buds, flowers, and seeds, it's easy to see how the red maple got its name. Red maple wood is used to make parts of guitars, banjos, drums, and other musical instruments because of its flexibility, sturdiness, and beautiful coloration.

## River Birch

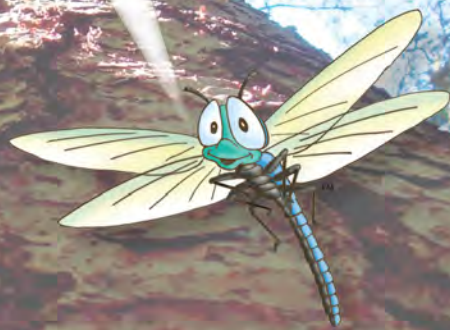


River Birch got its name because it likes to grow near water. The gray-brown bark **exfoliates** (peels) in paper-like strips. The leaves are green on top and whitish on the bottom, with serrated edges. White-tailed deer eat the leaves and twigs, and birds and rodents eat the seeds. Birch sap can be boiled to make birch syrup, which is sweeter than maple syrup, but harder to produce in large quantities.



# The Need for Trees

Trees are very important to people, animals, insects, fungi and even other trees. This is because trees provide so many things for people and the forest, including shelter, habitat, food and oxygen. This TRACK Trail Adventure will help you identify six of the most common trees found along this trail.



Use this brochure to identify and learn about trees. For your safety, stay on the trail and be aware of your surroundings. Poison ivy climbs up the trunks of trees, too... so if you see a hairy vine, don't hug that tree!



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



Thanks for joining us on the trail today! Visit our website to find more TRACK Trail™ adventures near you!



The next generation of stewards will help preserve the world's plants, animals, natural lands and our heritage. What will you do to make a difference?

### Kids in Parks...

Providing a network of fun-filled adventures that get kids and families active outdoors and connected to nature.



#### TRACK Trail Partners



#### Kids in Parks Founding Partners



Just like trees, seeds come in different shapes and sizes. With a little help from soil nutrients, moisture and sunlight, seeds can sprout into seedlings. For most tree species, when the sprout has reached 4 feet tall and up to 4 inches in diameter it becomes a sapling. Saplings officially become trees when their trunks are thicker than 4 inches in diameter at chest height.

## Tree Cycle

Most trees will continue to grow until their death. Sometimes, dead trees don't fall to the forest floor immediately. These trees, called snags, play an important role as habitat in the forest. Fallen trees and snags slowly decompose, recycling valuable nutrients back into the soil. This enriched soil helps sprouting seeds grow into healthy saplings, which then become full-grown trees to complete the cycle.

Tree Cycle Checklist:  
Can you find a...

Seed? \_\_\_  
Seedling? \_\_\_  
Sapling? \_\_\_  
Tree? \_\_\_  
Snag? \_\_\_  
Fallen Log? \_\_\_

