

☐ Sweetgum (Liquidambar styraciflua)



The Sweetgum is a “pioneer plant”, meaning that Sweetgums are among the first to begin growing in empty soil. Sweetgum seeds are carried by the tree’s unique, spikey fruit, called a “gumball”, and each fruit can contain up to 50 seeds. Other characteristics of the Sweetgum include its star-shaped leaves, and gray, wrinkled bark. Many animals depend on the Sweetgum for both food and shelter.

☐ Eastern Red Cedar (Juniperus virginiana)



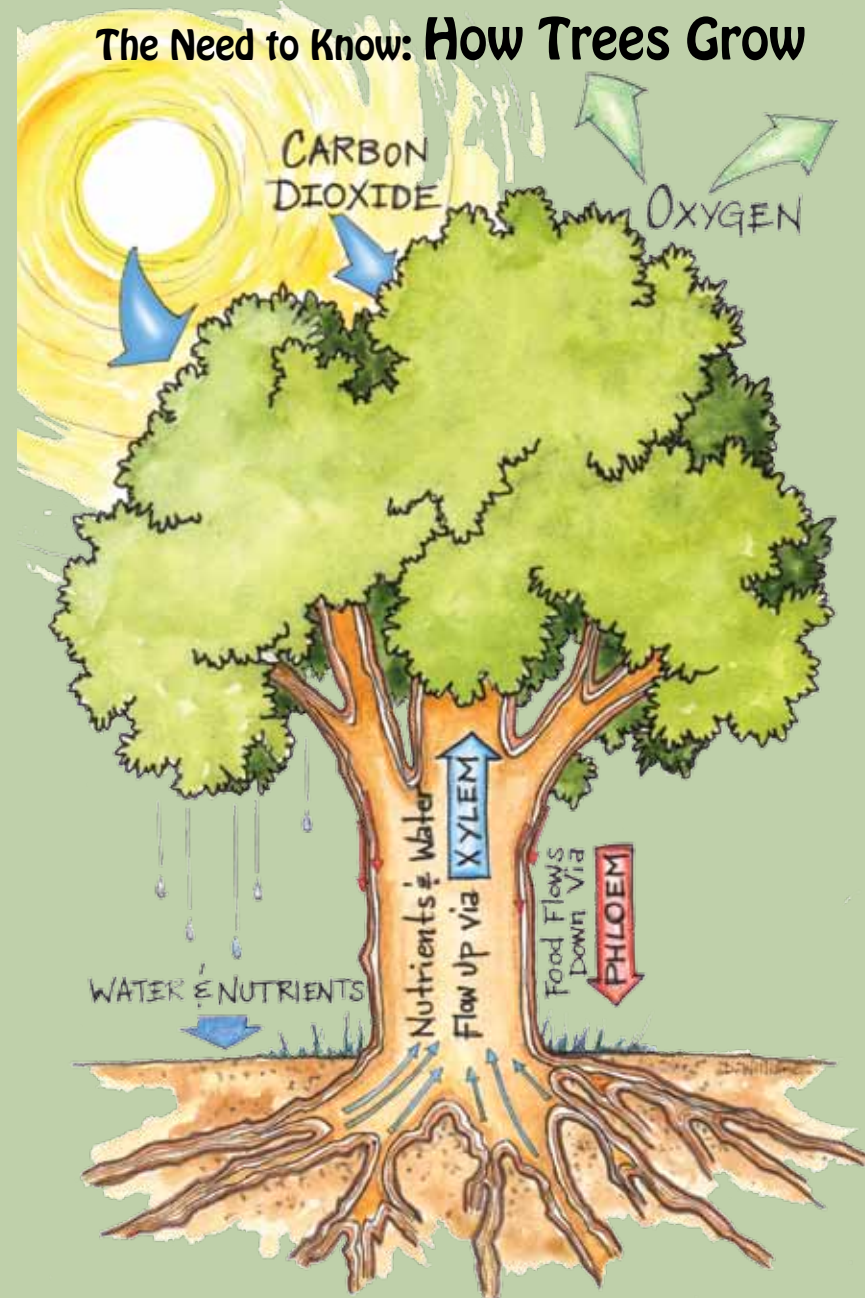
The Eastern Red Cedar is actually in the juniper family and is not closely related to other cedars. Its tough, stringy bark and waxy, scaly needles are designed for survival in very dry conditions. The berries of the red cedar are an important food source for many songbirds. The wood is prized by builders for its rich red color, sweet smell, and weather-resistant properties.

☐ Southern Red Oak (Quercus falcata)



The southern red oak tree has dark brown bark with wide gray ridges. The leaves are shiny green and variable in shape, but usually have long pointed lobes and a distinctive bell shape at the base. The acorns are an important food source for squirrels, deer, turkeys, and many songbirds. Because of its large size and strong wood, southern red oak has long been used by humans for lumber and fuel.

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

☐ Tulip Poplar (Liriodendron tulipifera)



Growing straight and tall with a light gray bark and a large broad leaf that looks like the tip has been bitten off, the tulip poplar is easy to find. Due to its large size and straight growth, this tree provides a lot of useful lumber. Tulip poplar is also a very important tree for honey production. In spring, honeybees collect nectar from the poplar’s large and plentiful yellow-orange flowers.

☐ Pignut Hickory (Carya glabra)



Hickory trees have **compound leaves** (many leaflets on one stem). The pignut hickory gets its name because the halved nuts look like a pig’s nose. Due to the high concentration of fats, these small nuts are an extremely important food source for wild animals such as squirrels, bears and wild turkey. Because of its relatively high heating value, hickory wood makes excellent fuel wood for stoves.

☐ Black Walnut (Juglans nigra)



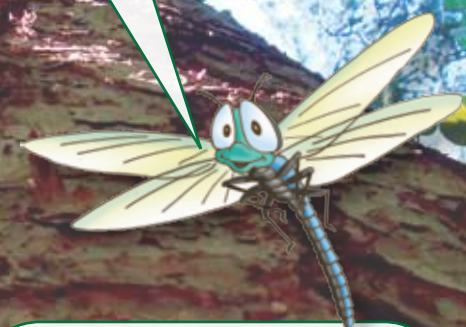
Black walnut trees grow best with lots of water and sunlight. They have dark brown or blackish bark and **compound leaves** (many leaflets on one stem). The nuts fall from the tree in autumn and are a favorite food of wild animals and humans alike, though removing the nut from the husk and shell is a rather messy and difficult process. Black walnut is also prized for its timber.



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!



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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.



Tree Cycle

Most trees will continue to grow until their death. Sometimes, dead trees don't fall to the forest floor immediately. These trees are called snags. 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.

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