

Longleaf Pine



The longleaf pine has wispy needles that are 6 to 18 inches long and come in fascicles (bundles) of three. The cones can grow up to 10 inches in length. The bark is gray and scaly, with long rectangular plates. Longleaf pines are fire and hurricane resistant, and actually grow better in areas that are burned. Longleaf pine stands provide important habitat for many birds, reptiles and mammals.

Bald Cypress



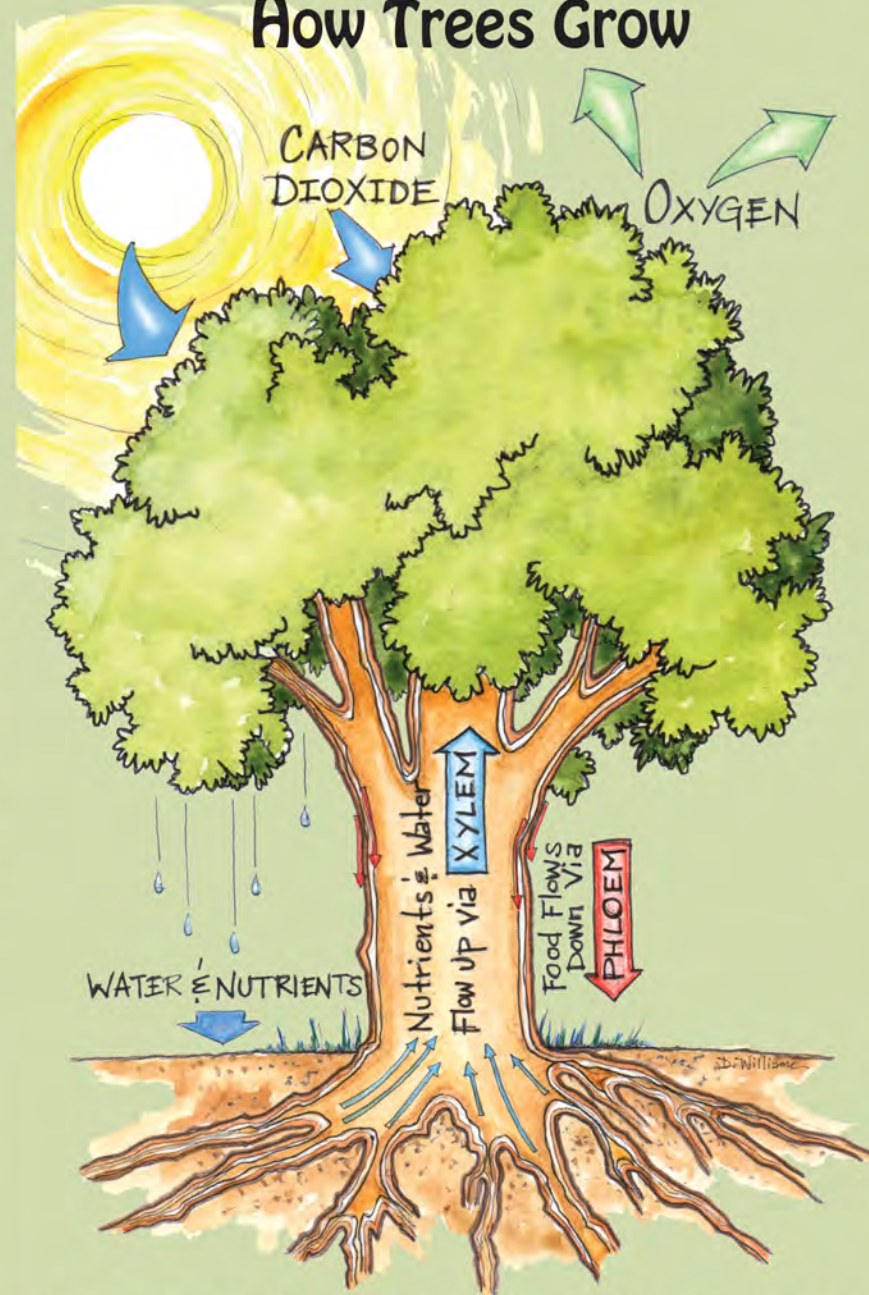
Bald cypress trees have stringy, reddish bark with ridges in a criss-cross pattern. Many have a wide trunk base for stability during floods. They are called "bald" cypress because unlike other conifers (cone-bearing trees), they shed their leaves each winter. Unique to cypress trees, "knees" are roots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

Pond Cypress



Similar to bald cypress, pond cypress trees love to grow in or near water. The bark of a pond cypress tends to have wider ridges than a bald cypress, and the needles are shorter and more scaly, pressed close to the twigs. Like bald cypress, the cones of pond cypress trees are round, green, and about 1" in diameter. Cypress trees provide important habitat for many frogs, salamanders and water birds.

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

Redbay



A relative of the avocado tree, redbay is a small evergreen tree with lance-shaped leaves that give off a spicy smell when crushed. The bark is rough and scaly, with an "alligator skin" appearance. The fruits are an important food source for many birds, and the leaves are eaten by deer and bears. Native Americans used redbay for medicinal purposes, and the leaves are still used today as food seasoning.

Loblolly Bay



Loblolly Bay is a small evergreen tree with blotchy gray bark that has long, narrow fissures. The leaves are shiny green with a fine saw-toothed edge. The tree produces fragrant white flowers in July and August. Look closely at the flowers to see the fringed (hairy) edges on the petals. Loblolly bay is a prized landscaping tree for its showy white flowers and shiny green leaves.

Eastern Red Cedar

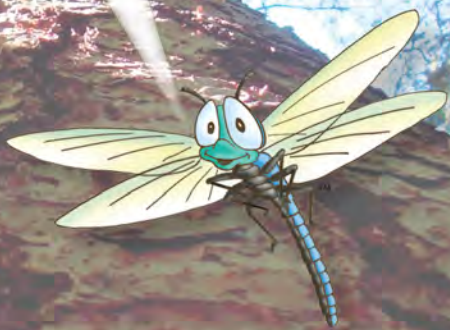


The Eastern Red Cedar is actually in the juniper family and is not closely related to other cedars. Its tough, stringy bark and waxy, scaly needles are designed for survival in very dry conditions. The berries of the red cedar are an important food source for many songbirds. The wood is prized by builders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



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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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?

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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? _____

