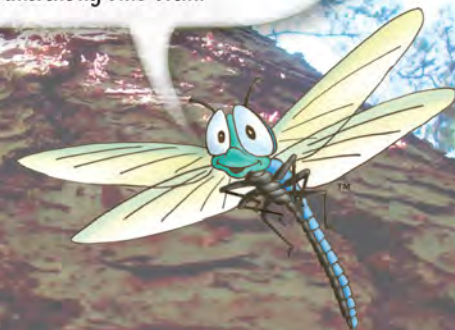




The Need for Trees

Trees are very important to people, animals, insects, fungus, 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 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.



Kids in Parks Founding Partners



This project was financed in part by the National Park Service's CONNECT TRAILS TO PARKS program, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the National Trails System in 2018.

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 Checklist: Can you find a...

Seed?

Seedling?

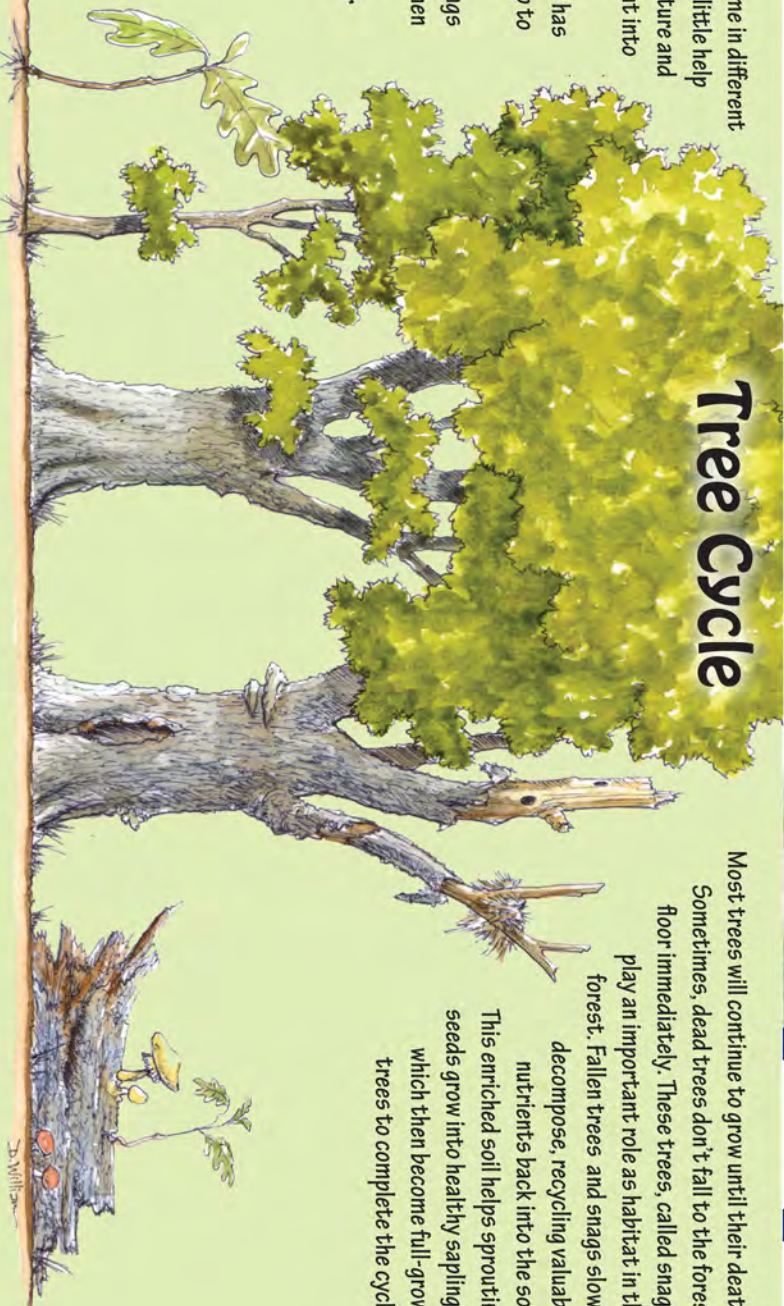
Sapling?

Tree?

Snag?

Fallen Log?

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.

Eastern Red Cedar



Can you smell the sweet scent of Eastern Red Cedars along the trail? This tree 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 dry conditions. The berries of the red cedar are an important food source for many songbirds. The wood is prized by builders because it is weather resistant and has a rich red color.

Sycamore



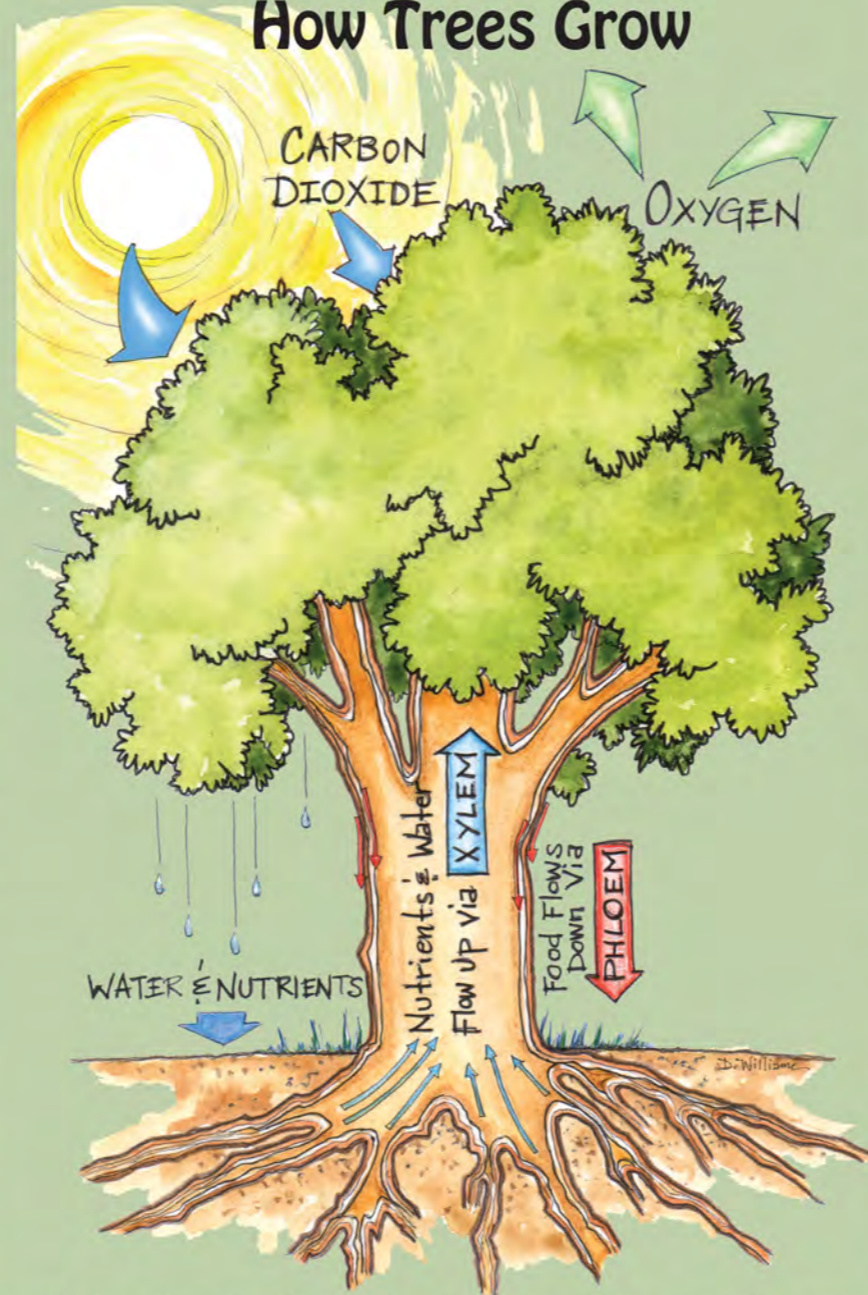
The sycamore is a large, fast-growing tree that is easily recognized by its mottled bark, which peels off in large irregular sheets to reveal shades of white, green, yellow, and brown underneath. The sycamore is also known as the buttonwood tree because of its round, fuzzy fruits (buttonballs). Native Americans used sycamore trees to make a variety of medicines.

Black Cherry



The black cherry's leaves are dark green and shiny with a fine, saw-toothed edge. The smooth bark has horizontal lines called **lenticels**, which become harder to see on the cracked bark of older trees. The black cherry tree is very widespread due to the many birds and mammals that eat the fruits and spread the seeds. Settlers in this region used the fruit to make jelly, and the bark to make cough medicine.

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

Pignut Hickory



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 a high concentration of fats, these small nuts are an extremely important food source for wild animals such as squirrels, bears and wild turkey. Hickory is a good fuel wood for fires and is often used to add smoke flavor to meats and cheeses.

Black Walnut



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 process. Black walnut is also prized for its sturdy and showy lumber.

Black Locust



Black locust trees have deeply furrowed bark with ridges that make a criss-cross pattern. The rounded leaves are **compound** (many leaflets on one stem), and the twigs have paired thorns. Native Americans used the branches to make bows, and early farmers used the trunks for fence-posts. It was said that if you built your fence out of locust, it would stand for 100 years and then turn to stone.