

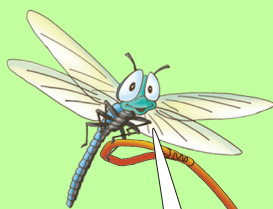
Just like trees, seeds come in different shapes and sizes. With a little help from soil nutrients, moisture and sunlight, seeds can sprout into seedlings. For most tree species, when the sprout has reached 4 feet tall and up to 4 inches in diameter it becomes a sapling. Saplings officially become trees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

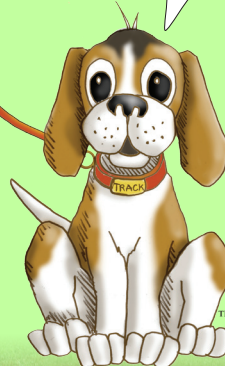
Tree Cycle Check List : Can you find a... Seed? ___ Seedling? ___ Sapling? ___ Tree? ___ Snag? ___ Fallen Log? ___

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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 the pictures and text in this brochure to identify and learn about trees. Just remember, for your safety, stay on the trail and be aware of your surroundings. Poison ivy likes to climb up the trunks of trees too... so if you see a hairy vine, Don't Hug That Tree!

White Oak



The leaves of the white oak have rounded lobes, and the bark has a scaly appearance 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 trees were valued in olden times for shipbuilding, and white oak is still used today to make barrels.

Yellow Poplar



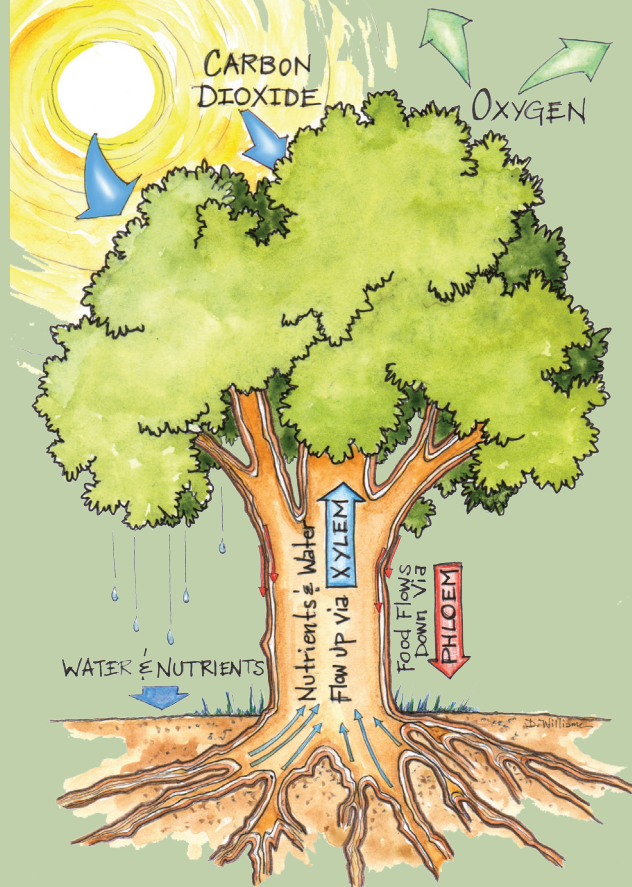
Growing straight and tall with a light gray bark and a large broad leaf that looks like the tip has been bitten off, the yellow poplar is easy to find. Due to its large size and straight growth, this tree provides a lot of useful lumber. Yellow poplar is also a very important tree for honey production.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

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 **bracts** (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.

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 is then distributed by way of its phloem to the rest of the tree, so it can grow.

Illustrations drawn by David Williams

Shagbark Hickory



True to its name, the shagbark hickory has rough, shaggy bark that peels in long strips as the tree grows older. The leaves are compound (many leaflets on one stem), and the fruits (hickory nuts) are an important food source for squirrels, raccoons, turkeys, and many other animals. Native Americans used the wood to make their bows and harvested the nuts for food, as people still do today.

Sugar Maple



Sugar maple trees have light brown to gray bark with long deep furrows on older trees. The leaves have pointed lobes and turn beautiful shades of red, orange, and yellow in fall. The fruits are **samaras** (have wings) and spin like helicopters in the wind. Sugar maple trees are the primary source of maple syrup. Sugar maple wood is used for basketball courts, baseball bats, bowling pins and musical instruments.

Eastern Hemlock



A very shade-tolerant tree, the eastern hemlock has short, rounded needles and cones about the size of a nickel. Over the past several decades, the eastern hemlock has been in decline due to the hemlock woolly adelgid, a tiny sap-sucking insect that was accidentally introduced from Asia. The woolly adelgid makes egg sacks that look like tiny tufts of wool on the tree's twigs.