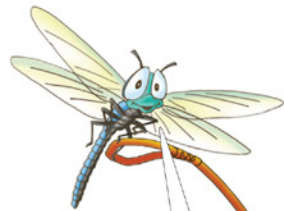


TRACK your hike at
kidsinparks.com
 and get **FREE** prizes!



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.



TRACK Trail Partners



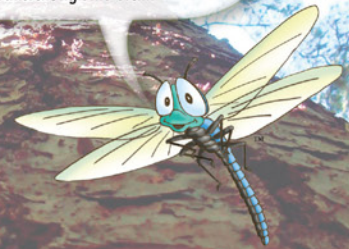
Kids in Parks Founding Partners



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 as you hike along the trail. Come back and explore often. Nature changes daily!



Tree Cycle

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? ☐

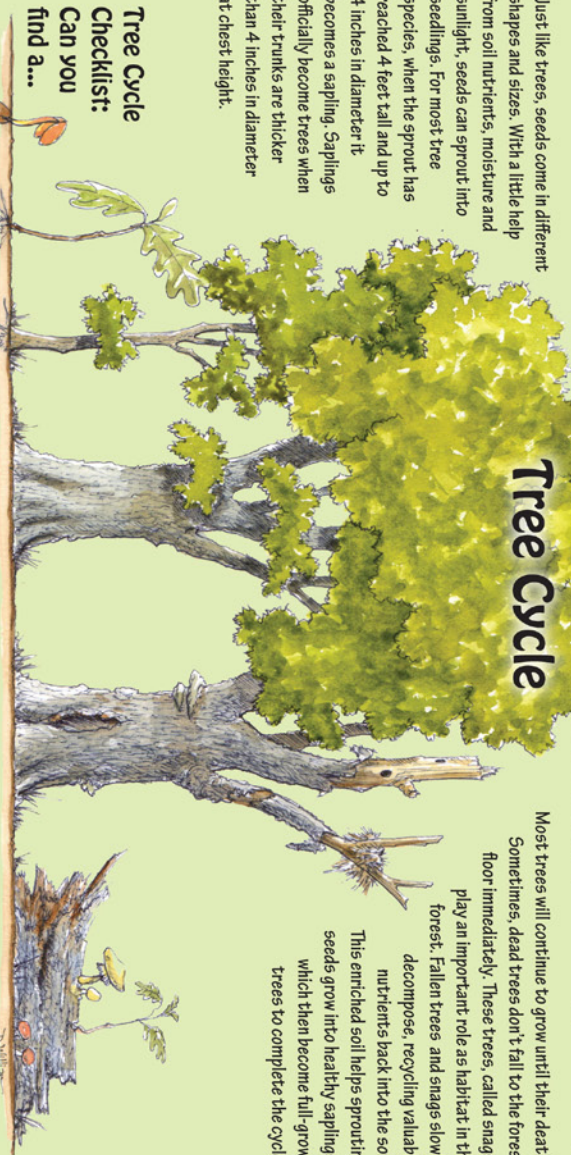
Seedling? ☐

Sapling? ☐

Tree? ☐

Snag? ☐

Fallen Log? ☐



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 (*Juniperus virginiana*)



Actually not a cedar but a juniper, this is the only evergreen (or **conifer**) native to this area. Red cedar is planted in shelterbelts for year-round wind protection and wildlife habitat. Smell the leaves and you'll know why Native Americans used them as air fresheners. The purple, berry-like cones are used commercially to flavor gin. The durable wood is used for fence posts, house siding and furniture.

□ Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*)



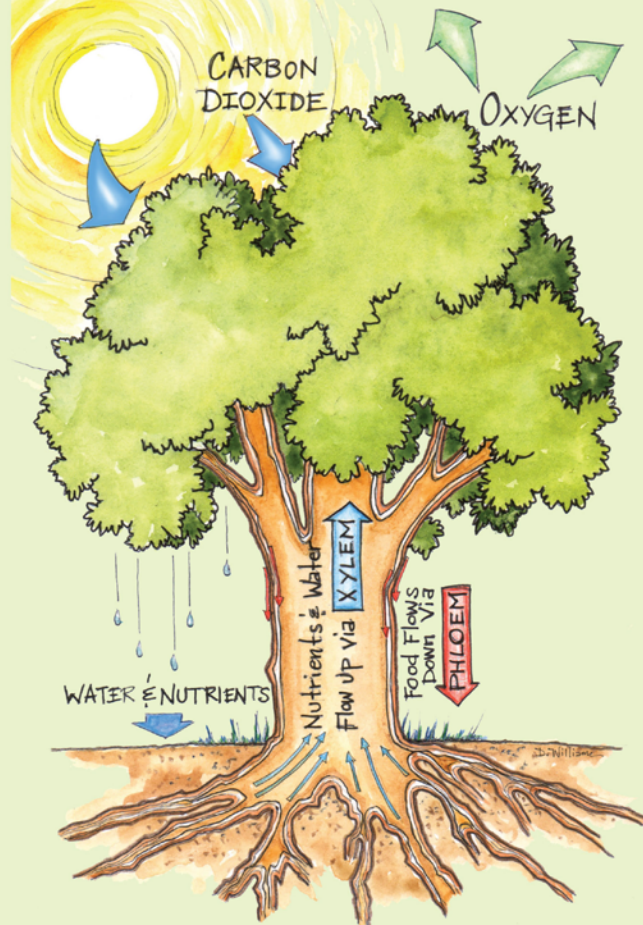
Silver maple is a fast-growing tree with scaly gray bark and leaves with deep, pointed lobes. Like other maples trees, it has winged seeds (called **samaras**) that spin when they fall. Due to its rapid growth, silver maple is popular as a landscaping tree and for wind-breaks on farms. The sap was used by Native Americans as a remedy for various physical ailments.

□ Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)



This native, long-lived tree is often called "mossy-cup oak" because of the fringed margin of the cup that covers half or more of the acorn. Bur oak is drought-resistant, with taproots that can grow to be fourteen feet long in eight years. The leaves have 5-9 lobes, with the two center notches usually reaching to the midrib of the leaf. Large bur oaks were harvested by pioneers for cabins, fence posts 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, Wingle's Works

□ Green Ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanicus*)



A medium-sized tree with **compound leaves** (many leaflets on one stem), the green ash grows well in many areas of South Dakota. The winged seeds last through the winter and attract birds, deer and rabbits. Native Americans used the wood to make bows, arrows, tipi pegs, drums and meat-drying racks. If you have a wooden tennis racket or baseball bat, it might be made from green ash.

□ Cottonwood (*Populus deHoides*)



Cottonwood is the largest and fastest growing tree in South Dakota. It is native to moist soils along streams and wetlands throughout the state. In South Dakota, it is primarily used as a shade tree in riverside parks or other low, moist areas. Native Americans ate the young sprouts and inner bark for its nutritive value and sweetness. The wood is used for making boxes, crates and pallets.

□ Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*)



Note the corky warts or ridges on the gray bark. The coarsely serrated, lance-shaped leaves are thin and sometimes sandpapery. The fruit is purple and berry-like. This tree is sometimes called **sugarberry** because the ripe berries are very sweet. Native Americans valued the plant as a food and medicine. Many wild birds and mammals eat the fruits.