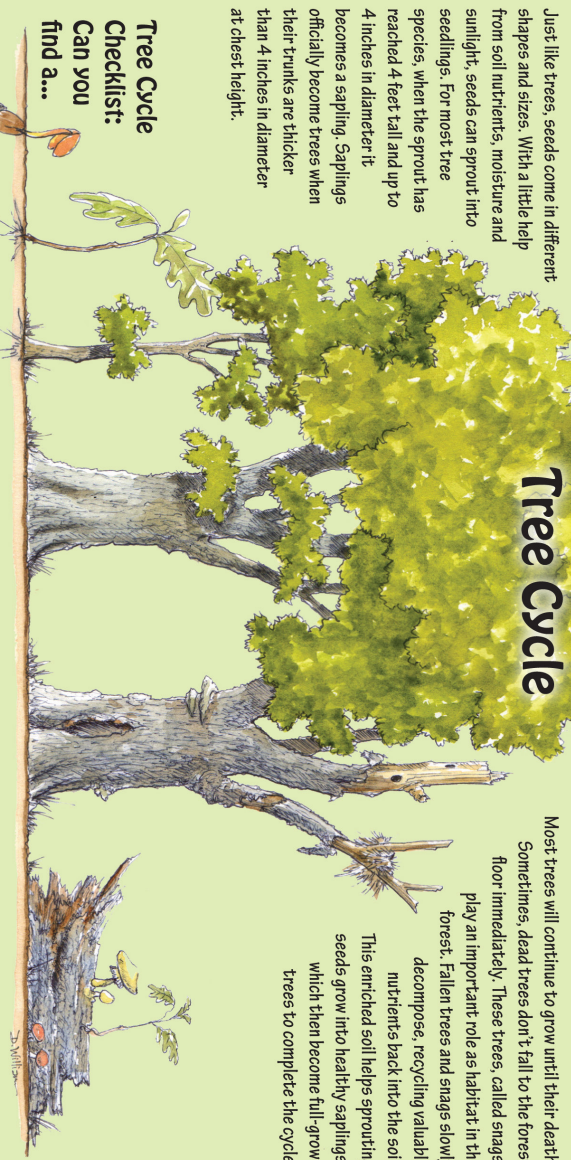


Tree Cycle Checklist:
Can you find a...

Seed? ☐ Seedling? ☐ Sapling? ☐ Tree? ☐ Snag? ☐ Fallen Log? ☐

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.

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.

TRACK your hike at

kidsinparks.com

and get **FREE** prizes!



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?



Thanks for joining us on the trail today! Visit our website to find more TRACK Trail™ adventures near you!

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.



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!

■ American Beech



With its extremely smooth, light gray bark and leaves with serrated edges, the American beech is a very easy tree to identify. Beech nuts are eaten by a large variety of birds and mammals, including ducks, blue jays, deer, black bears and foxes. Beech wood is used commercially for flooring, furniture, plywood, railroad ties, paper pulp and heating.

■ Tulip Poplar



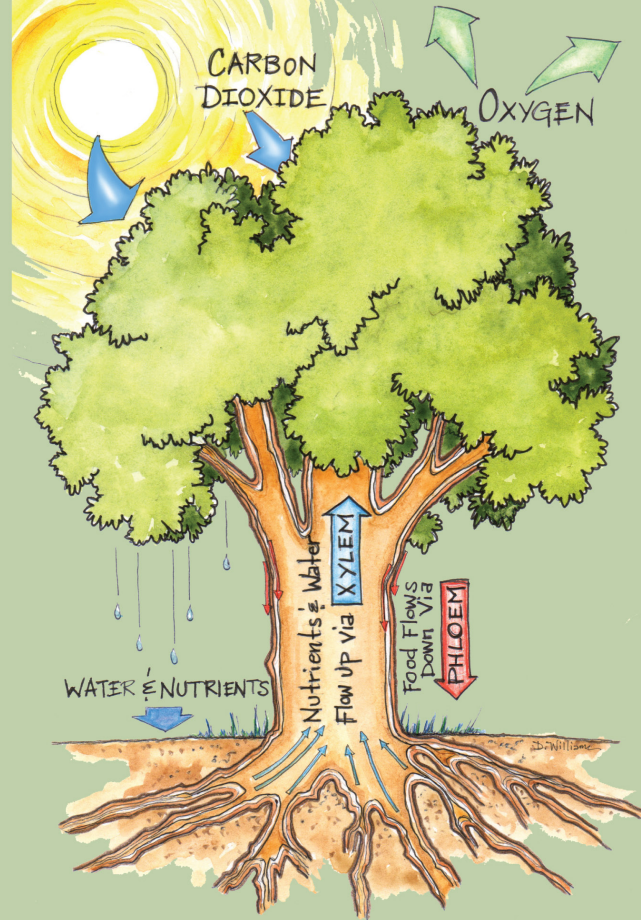
Growing straight and tall with a light gray bark and a large broad leaf that looks like the tip has been bitten off, the tulip poplar is easy to find. Due to its large size and straight growth, this tree provides a lot of useful lumber. Tulip poplar is also a very important tree for honey production.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

■ White Pine



With an extremely straight trunk, needle leaves in fascicles (bundles) of five and long skinny cones, the eastern white pine is easy to identify. This tree has long been used as a source of food and medicine. The needles are high in vitamin C and are used to make tisane, an herbal tea. Deer and rabbits eat the foliage and songbirds and mice graze on the seeds. White pine is also a valuable lumber tree.

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

■ 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 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.

■ Red Maple



Able to grow in almost any soil condition, the red maple is one of the most abundant and widespread trees in eastern North America. With red twigs, buds, flowers, and seeds, it's easy to see how the red maple got its name. Red maple wood is used to make parts of guitars, banjos, drums, and other musical instruments because of its flexibility, sturdiness, and beautiful coloration.

■ Yellow Birch



The yellow birch has smooth gray bark with thin horizontal stripes called **lenticels**. On older trees the bark **exfoliates** (peels) in wide, paper-like strips. The branches droop and the leaves are shiny green, turning a beautiful yellow in the fall. Tool handles, ice cream sticks, toothpicks and toys are often made with the wood. As with most birch trees, the sap of yellow birch can be used to make syrup.