

● **Bald Cypress** (*Taxodium distichum*)



Look for stringy, reddish bark with ridges in a criss-cross pattern. Many bald cypress trees have a wide trunk base for stability during floods. Unlike most conifers, bald cypress trees shed their leaves each winter. Unique to bald cypress, “knees” are roots that have grown upward above the ground and may help anchor the trees in soft soil. Bald cypress trees cause floodwaters to slow down and help trap pollutants.

● **Redbud** (*Persea borbonia*)



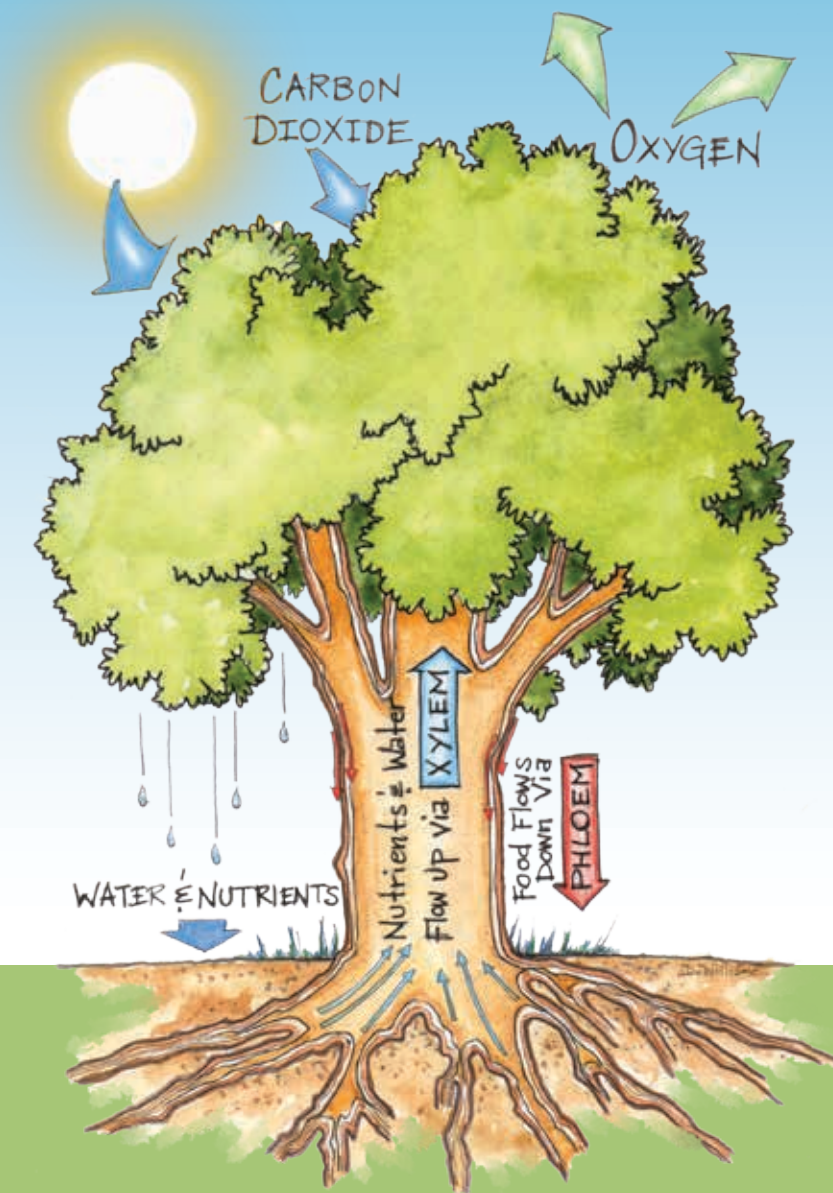
Redbud is a small tree that blooms with beautiful pink or reddish-purple flowers in the spring. It is a favorite ornamental plant along roadsides and in gardens throughout the eastern United States. Native Americans used the bark to make medicines for various illnesses. The flowers are an important source of nectar for hummingbirds and honeybees, and the seeds are eaten by birds, deer and squirrels.

● **Water Oak** (*Quercus nigra*)



The water oak’s leaves are spatula-like with three lobes at the end. The brown and grey bark tends to appear patchy, and it will develop rough, scaly ridges as it ages. They produce small acorns with shallow caps about the size of a dime. Forgotten acorns, buried by squirrels, are most responsible for the abundance of this fast-growing tree, and people often use the water oak’s wood to heat their homes.

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

● **Sweetgum** (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)



The sweetgum is a “pioneer plant”, meaning that sweetgums are among the first to begin growing in bare soil. Sweetgum seeds are carried by the tree’s unique, spikey fruit, called a “gumball”, and each fruit can contain up to 50 seeds. Other characteristics of the sweetgum include its star-shaped leaves, and gray, wrinkled bark. Many animals depend on the sweetgum for both food and shelter.

● **Longleaf Pine** (*Pinus palustris*)



With needles up to 18 inches long, it’s easy to see how the longleaf pine got its name. You can often find the longleaf in its “grass stage”, where it appears as a short, clump of needles growing closer to the ground. It has course, rectangular bark, and its six to ten inch cones are somewhat cylindrical. The longleaf was once a major source for turpentine and resin, as well as lumber for shipbuilding.

● **Loblolly Pine** (*Pinus taeda*)



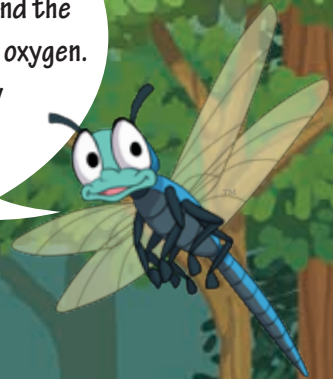
Loblolly pines have clusters of needles that grow in groups of three. The bark is thick, scaly and grey with layers of brown underneath, and their pinecones are brown and prickly. The loblolly can grow very quickly in either wet or dry soil. Because of how fast it grows, people plant them in huge numbers to later be used for lumber and paper. People also plant them to create shade and to stop erosion.



# 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 adventure will help you identify six of the most common trees found along this trail

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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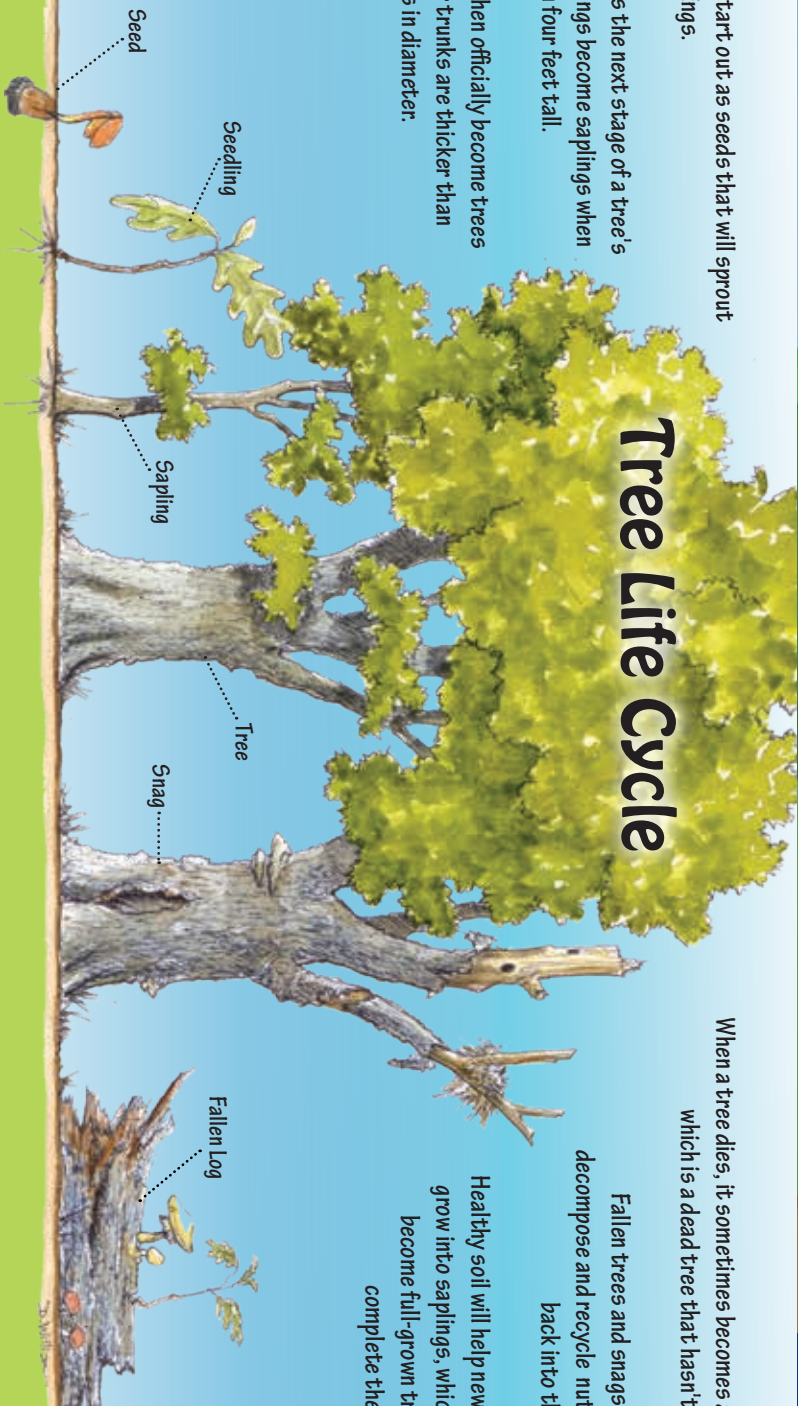
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All trees start out as seeds that will sprout into seedlings.

A sapling is the next stage of a tree's life. Seedlings become saplings when they reach four feet tall.

Saplings then officially become trees when their trunks are thicker than four inches in diameter.

## Tree Life Cycle



When a tree dies, it sometimes becomes a snag, which is a dead tree that hasn't fallen.

Fallen trees and snags slowly decompose and recycle nutrients back into the soil.

Healthy soil will help new seeds grow into saplings, which then become full-grown trees to complete the cycle.

Can you find a...

Seed?

Seedling?

Sapling?

Tree?

Snag?

Fallen Log?