

LEAF IDENTIFICATION GAME

Identify Ontario native trees by their leaves and learn their species scientific names

What you'll need:

- The matching page
- Pencil
- Observation skills

Activity setup:

1. Draw a line from the tree leaf to its corresponding **common name** and **scientific name**.
2. Not familiar with all the species? No worries! Ask someone in your household for help—or just take a guess! Then look up the species you still aren't sure about.
3. Take this page with you on a walk. Find the trees that match the leaves in your neighbourhood and cross them off your list. (Stay safe: maintain physical distance from others and be careful around water.)
4. Be kind to nature: look with your eyes and don't take leaves from trees.
5. Bonus: Count the number of each tree species you come across on your walk.

How does it work?

Each species has a **common name** — for instance, weeping willow — and a **scientific name** — *Salix babylonica*. The scientific name comes from a “two-naming system” known as **binomial nomenclature**, created by Carl Linnaeus. The first part of the name, in this case *Salix*, identifies the **genus** to which the species belongs. The second part of the name, *babylonica*, is more specific and it identifies the **species** within the genus.

On your walk, you may notice quite a few trees of **one species** — that's species abundance. You'll probably notice quite a few **different kinds** of trees, as well as other plants, and animals, like squirrels and birds. That's **species diversity**. A healthy environment has both abundance and a rich diversity.



LEAF

IDENTIFICATION GAME



- Sugar maple**
Acer saccharum
- Paper birch**
Betula papyrifera
- Basswood**
Tilia americana
- White oak**
Quercus alba
- Tulip tree**
Lireodendron tulipifera
- Northern catalpa**
Catalpa speciosa
- American beech**
Fagus grandifolia
- Eastern sycamore**
Platanus occidentalis
- Bigtooth aspen**
Populus grandidentata
- Eastern white cedar**
Thuja occidentalis



LEAF

IDENTIFICATION GAME

SPOILER ALERT
ANSWERS AHEAD!



**ONTARIO
SCIENCE
CENTRE**
An agency of the
Government of Ontario

LEAF

IDENTIFICATION GAME



Sugar maple

Acer saccharum

2

Paper birch

Betula papyrifera

5

Basswood

Tilia americana

6

White oak

Quercus alba

7

Tulip tree

Lireodendron tulipifera

9

Northern catalpa

Catalpa speciosa

8

American beech

Fagus grandifolia

3

Eastern sycamore

Platanus occidentalis

10

Bigtooth aspen

Populus grandidentata

1

Eastern white cedar

Thuja occidentalis

4



ONTARIO
SCIENCE
CENTRE
An agency of the
Government of Ontario