

Tree ID Overview

6th-12th grade

60 students maximum (15 students per backpack)

Use a teacher guide, student guide, an activity backpack and map to explore trees up-close. Through this map-reading/scavenger hunt students are given the task of locating and identifying different tree species. Each student can create sketches of the trees identified or just hone their tree identifying skills. Each student should bring a notebook or sketchpad and pen/pencil for this activity. Each pack serves 15 students and two chaperones. Pick up and return backpacks on the backpack rack in front of the Thornhill Annex Driveway near Parking Lot 21.

Contents of backpack:

The contents of the pack are for use during the program only. Please be sure that all items are returned to the pack at the end of the program.

- One Teacher Packet
- Four Student Packets (with maps)
- Four Tree Finder field guides
- Four baggies with crayons (for leaf or bark rubbings)
- Small paper for leaf or bark rubbings (although some paper is provided, it is recommended that each student bring a notebook or sketchpad)

How to use this backpack:

Exactly how you use this backpack is determined by you and your group based on your goals and the purpose of your field trip. Some suggestions:

- Have students create an identification page for each tree. Students could draw leaves, seeds, flowers and bark. Depending on the time of year, it may not be possible to see all these items for every tree, so students may only be able to do a few of these items. See attached student example #1 and example #2
- Have students do tree rubbings. This includes leaf rubbings and bark rubbings. Leaf rubbings can be challenging since you cannot remove leaves from trees, but you can pick leaves up from the ground for this purpose or do the rubbings without removing the leaves from the trees. If you are going to do this, be sure to distribute crayons to each group (one baggie of crayons per group).
- There are a lot of trees in this activity. Simply walking the path (reading the map) or finding and identifying trees can be a wonderful way to enjoy your visit. Students can learn about what to look for to identify different types of trees, such as simple/compound leaves, leaves vs. leaflets and opposite vs. alternate. Additionally, they can learn how to properly use a dichotomous key - great tool for a variety of different scientific research fields.
- A follow up activity to this field trip is to have students do further research on one or more of the trees they identified.

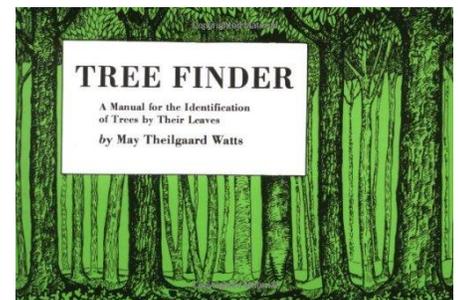
Self-guided Tree ID Leader Instruction Packet

Before you get started:

- There are restrooms available at The Thornhill Picnic Shelter.
- Although it is possible to find and roughly sketch many of the trees in 1 ½ hours, students who complete more comprehensive tree sketches may find the time a limiting factor. Making clear the expectations of the group (finding ten plants and noting the species, OR locating 5 species and doing more comprehensive species sketches, etc.) and how the students might be assessed on their work greatly enhances the self-guided activity.
- Picking live plants (or parts of live plants) is prohibited at the Arboretum. The Morton Arboretum is a tree museum and the plants are our exhibits. Please make sure to enjoy the plants without damaging or removing them and leave our exhibits intact for the next visitor.
- Although there are enough supplies for students to break into four small groups for this activity, it is **REQUIRED** that a chaperone remain with each group of students, regardless of their age, at all times. Please plan accordingly.

Self-Guided Tree ID Directions:

1. Each backpack is designed for 15 students.
2. Group the students into small groups of 3-4 students. Although smaller groups are good for participation in the tour, please keep the “backpack” group together. Each “backpack” group of students will need to have 1-2 adults with the students at all times. You have enough supplies to divide the students into 4 groups.
3. Distribute one student packet to each small group. Read through the Tree Identification directions (found in the student’s packet) with your students so they know how to use the dichotomous key before they start.
4. Distribute *Tree Finder* books – one per small group. *Remind students that they are for use during the program, but will need to be returned.*
5. For the individual groups, rather than find every tree, you can have some students find even numbered trees and other students find odd numbered trees. Suggestions for activities you can do with this backpack are listed on the “How to Use this Backpack” page. Examples are shown on attached sheets.
 - a. As students travel and find points on the map, they should identify the tree they locate. They should use the *Tree Finder* book for this.
 - b. Students should record the names of the trees they find. They should then read the “Interesting facts about the trees you found” (located in the leaders packet) at each location.



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6. Although you may have to walk off the trail a bit to see a tree up close, the trees in this identification activity are all along the trail.
7. Each tree you are prompted to identify is marked along the path with a designated brown stake that has a corresponding number to each clue, and a stamp of an oak leaf. The trees have a metal tag that has an accession number that corresponds to the "ANSWER KEY" on the back page of the student packet. They can check to see if they were able to ID the tree correctly.
8. Each small group should have one student who checks the tree label (usually located on the south side of the trunk) to ensure that the students are identifying the correct tree. They will need to check the accession number (see Tree Identification Directions for details). It is recommended that members of a small group rotate through this task so each student can have a chance reading the tree labels AND identifying the trees.

