



## Native Tree Leaves Activity Set

### Activity #4: Tree Diversity In your Yard

Biodiversity is the variability of living things. You don't have to go too far to appreciate the diversity of trees in your area. Chances are your own backyard and local trails may be filled with native trees. In this activity you will be exploring the tree biodiversity in your local area!

#### Goals

- Understand what biodiversity is
- Appreciate the biodiversity that can be found locally

#### Materials

- Native Tree Leaves in your Neighbourhood biodiversity sheet

**Exercise 1: Outdoor Exploration.** Explore a local area and see how many different species of trees are in your neighborhood. Students can use the Native Tree Leaves in your Neighbourhood biodiversity sheet to identify some of the trees. Even if students aren't able to identify every tree, they can still appreciate the diversity of trees in your area.

**Exercise 2: Reflection.** Once the students have had the chance to explore the diversity of trees in their area ask them to reflect on what they found. Was there a large diversity of trees in the area? Ask the students to consider why having different species of trees is valuable to an ecosystem.

Prompt: Why is diversity important for people? Do all trees look, grow, and function in the same ways?

**Exercise 3: Tree Biodiversity.** Ontario is home to 85 species of native trees. Different trees are better suited to different climates, habitats, and soil types. From the milder climate experienced at the southern tip of Ontario, to the colder climate found in the boreal forest, we have trees that are adapted to live in every region of the province. Consider the most common species of tree the students found while exploring the outdoors. Invite the students to conduct some independent research to understand how and why that tree is adapted to grow in their area.