

MEET AN EVERGREEN TREE

Have you ever noticed that some trees stay green in the winter? Trees that stay green all year round are called evergreen trees. These trees have special waxy-coated, needle-shaped leaves. There are four common types of evergreen trees; pines, spruces, firs and junipers. Pine trees have needles that are bundled together where they attach to the branch, spruce trees have individual sharp square needles, fir trees have individual flat friendly (soft) needles and junipers have leaves that look like scales instead of needles. Next time you take a walk through the Gardens keep an eye open for all four types of evergreen trees.

Tree Sketch

Find an evergreen tree to study.
Sketch a picture of the tree here.

Tree Bark

What color is the tree's bark? Feel the bark of the tree.
Is it smooth, rough, sticky or maybe bumpy? Use the
space below to make a rubbing of the tree's bark.

Tree Cones

Do you see any cones on or around the tree?
Sketch a picture of what the tree's cones look like.

Tree Habitats

Do you think any animals live in the tree?
Watch the tree for signs of animal life. Draw a picture of
an animal you think might make its home in this tree.

Tree Needles

What kind of leaves does the tree have? Find a needle from the tree on the ground or gently pull one
off the tree and think of three words to describe its shape.

LIST YOUR WORDS HERE: _____

WINTER ACTIVITIES

Roasted Roots!

Roast up a tasty root-licious winter snack using vegetables that grow underground. Take a trip to the grocery store and pick up a colorful variety of root vegetables. Veggies that are great for roasting include: potatoes (look for little potatoes in different colors), carrots, parsnips, turnips, beets, rutabagas and celery root.

When you get your veggies home take a close look at them and see if you can find little root hairs growing from them. Are the vegetables all the same shape, size and color? Which vegetable is the biggest? Which vegetable is the smallest?

Scrub your veggies under warm water to get them ready for cooking, then look for a roasted root vegetable recipe online or try our simple suggestion below.

ROASTED ROOT VEGETABLES:

After cleaning off the root vegetables, cut them up into bite sized ½ inch cubes. (Save the tops of the vegetables to use with the Kitchen Scrap Garden activity). In a mixing bowl, combine the cubed veggies with a little bit of olive oil. Gently toss the veggies to make sure they are coated. Spread the cubes out in a baking pan. Sprinkle with salt and pepper if desired. Bake at 375°F -400°F for about 30-40 minutes until vegetables are soft and lightly browned.

Kitchen Scrap Garden

Save the tops of root vegetables and create an indoor gardening science experiment. Cut about an inch and a half off the top of a variety of root vegetables. Spread gravel, marbles or rocks in the bottom of a pie plate or other similar container. Gently settle the vegetable tops on top of the gravel in the pie plate. Place the pie plate near a sunny window and fill the container with water so the bottoms of the vegetable tops are wet but not completely submerged. Check on your veggies every day, making sure there is enough water in the container. Watch and see which veggies start to sprout!

Read a Winter Classic

Check out some winter garden books to read on a cold snowy day. Look for these favorites:

"First Snow in the Woods"

Written By: Carl R. Sams II and Jean Stoick

"Stranger in the Woods: A Photographic Fantasy"

Written By: Carl R. Sams II and Jean Stoick

"Winter Friends"

Written By: Carl R Sams II and Jean Stoick

"When Snowflakes Fall"

Written By: Carl R. Sams II

"Time to Sleep"

Written By: Denise Fleming

