



# AMONG THE LEAVES

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# AMONG THE LEAVES

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Deciduous trees and evergreen trees are two of the most common types of trees found around the world.



## DECIDUOUS TREES

Deciduous trees are characterized by their ability to shed their leaves in the fall. These trees often have robust trunks with branches that stretch out like fingers, adorned with thick foliage that provides shade and shelter during the hot summer months. When the seasons change and the temperatures begin to drop, the leaves of deciduous trees turn brilliant shades of yellow, orange, and red before eventually falling to the ground, creating a carpet of leaves underfoot. In the winter, deciduous trees are bare, revealing their intricate branching patterns against the stark white of the snow.





## EVERGREEN TREES

In contrast, evergreen trees retain their foliage year-round, with thick needles or small, leathery leaves that are resistant to cold temperatures and harsh weather conditions. These trees provide a constant source of greenery even in the depths of winter, and their branches are often used as decoration during the winter holiday season. Evergreen trees can grow to be quite tall, with some reaching heights of over 30 m (100 ft). Their dense foliage provides shelter and nesting grounds for a wide range of animals, from squirrels and birds to deer and bears.

Deciduous and evergreen trees are an essential component of our ecosystem, providing vital oxygen, shelter, and food for a multitude of creatures. Their beauty and majesty have inspired artists, poets, and writers for centuries, and they continue to captivate and awe us with their stunning presence.






# FRUIT-BEARING TREES

(APPLE, PEAR,  
PEACH, FIG)

Fruit-bearing trees are a fascinating aspect of nature, with their ability to produce delicious, edible fruits that offer a feast for both the eyes and palate. These magnificent trees require a specific set of conditions to thrive, such as the right amount of sunlight, water, and nutrients. They also require consistent care, including pruning and fertilization, to ensure their optimal growth and fruit production.







Some fruit-bearing trees can produce fruit for several years, while others have a limited lifespan of fruit production. This is due to a variety of factors, including the age and health of the tree, as well as the amount of stress it endures. Fruit-bearing trees are a crucial component of our food system, providing a healthy and delicious source of sustenance for people worldwide. Their beautiful blooms and bountiful fruits are a reminder of the abundance and wonder of nature.



# MAHOGANY TREES



Mahogany trees are found in many parts of the world, particularly in the tropical regions of the Americas, Africa, and Asia. They are known for their dense reddish-brown wood, which is highly valued for its durability, beauty, and versatility. These stately trees can grow to be over 20 m (65 ft) tall and have a canopy that spreads out to over 15 m (50 ft) in diameter. Their leaves are large and shiny, with a deep green color that contrasts beautifully with the warm tones of their wood.



The wood of the mahogany tree is dense, hard, and resistant to decay, making it ideal for use in furniture, flooring, and other high-quality products. Its rich, reddish-brown color and fine grain give it a distinctive and luxurious look that is highly sought after by craftspeople and consumers alike. Sadly, mahogany trees are currently facing significant threats from overexploitation and habitat loss, as well as illegal logging and deforestation. Efforts are underway to protect and conserve these magnificent trees and ensure that they continue to thrive and flourish for generations to come.






# CHERRY TREES



Cherry trees are an exquisite and beloved tree species known for their vibrant, showy blossoms and delicious fruit. They are native to many parts of the world, including Asia, Europe, and North America, and are highly valued for their ornamental and culinary uses. Cherry trees can grow to be up to 9 m (30 ft) tall, with a broad, spreading canopy that is covered in stunning pink or white blossoms during the spring season. Their leaves are dark green and glossy, with a distinctly pointed shape that adds to their overall charm and appeal.







In addition to their striking appearance, cherry trees are also known for their delicious fruit, which is often used in pies, jams, and other sweet treats. Cherries come in a variety of colors, ranging from deep red to golden yellow, and are highly prized for their juicy, sweet flavor. They are also valued for their cultural significance, with cherry blossom festivals and traditions celebrated in many parts of the world.





# ELM TREES

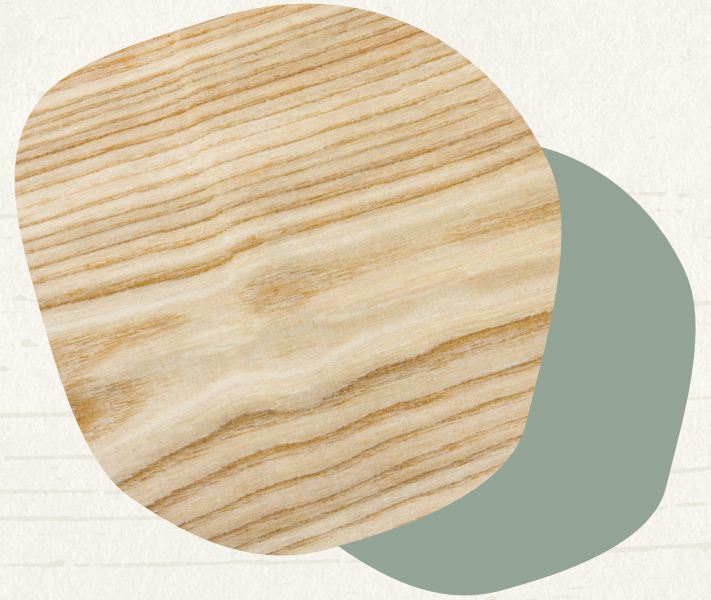


The stately elm tree once thrived throughout North America, loved for its striking long branches and immense shade. However, around 1930, Dutch elm disease was introduced unintentionally from Europe, possibly by imported timber. Dutch elm disease is a fungus that is most often spread by insects such as the bark beetle. Since then, many species of elm trees have been declining.

There are more than 30 species of elm trees throughout the world; however, most of them are in the northern regions of Europe, Asia, and North America. Elm trees can grow tall, usually about 15 to 20 m (50 to 70 ft), and some can grow over 30 m (100 ft). The fruit of an elm tree is called a samara. It often has flat “wings” on either side to help carry it on the wind to other places to take root. Elm leaves are toothed and uniquely lopsided, with one side of each base longer than the other.



Elm wood is very valuable, especially for making boats, because it is still durable when underwater. In the past it was even used to make water pipes in England. Slippery elm is also believed to have medicinal properties for ailments, including sore throats.







# EUCALYPTUS TREES



High up in the top of a tree in Australia, a koala munches away on tough, leathery leaves. These are the leaves of the lovely-smelling eucalyptus, sometimes called the gum tree. A waxy coating on the leaves helps hold in water even in Australia's dry bushlands, so much so that koalas do not need to drink and instead get much of their water from eating enough eucalyptus.

Koalas aren't the only living things that rely on the eucalyptus. The long leaves are also rich with oils that can be used for healing aches, clearing up congestion, and keeping mosquitoes away. Old trees can form hollow sections that become homes to possums, parrots, bats, and even bees. The bark from some species of these fast-growing trees can be made into paper, and their wood can be made into fences and building materials.



Not only is eucalyptus a fast-growing tree family, it is also one of the tallest. A swamp gum tree on Australia's island of Tasmania is so tall at 100 m (330 ft) that it has its own name, Centurion.

Aside from Australia, eucalyptus is native to other Pacific islands. In the Philippines the rainbow eucalyptus reveals an array of splendid colors when its bark begins to peel.







Their prickly leaves can be shaped like needles or scales, and many kinds of juniper have both. Juniper flowers are either male or female, and often a single tree bears only one kind of flower, meaning that more than one tree is needed for pollination to occur. Junipers are a type of conifer, meaning that their reddish or blue “berries” are actually a type of cone! These cones are often used to add flavor to foods or drinks. Juniper cones are a traditional spice for softening the strong flavor of game meats such as venison. Native Americans have also used these cones in medicines.





Imagine standing in the middle of a forest filled with evergreen spruce trees, flurries of snow falling all around and landing softly on the whorled branches. What a beautiful sight that would be! Spruce trees are another type of evergreen tree, characterized by scaly bark and a pyramid shape. Unlike pine needles, spruce needles are attached individually. There are around 40 species of spruce trees found in the Northern Hemisphere of the earth, some of which can live more than 600 years. In fact, a spruce tree in Sweden named Old Tjikko is said to be over 9,000 years old!





# SPRUCE TREES



Many of these spruce species have fascinating uses. White spruce and Engelmann spruce make good lumber and timber, while Norway and Serbian spruce make good Christmas trees. The Wright brothers' famous first aircraft was made from spruce trees, and some instruments like guitars, mandolins, and violins also contain spruce wood. In addition, spruce trees are used to make paper, their shoots are a good source of vitamin C, and Native Americans made baskets from their flexible roots. Talk about some useful trees!

There is one part of a spruce tree, however, that can have its disadvantages. The resin of spruce trees is highly flammable and can cause forest fires. Although forest fires can sometimes be good for ecosystems, they can be dangerous for nearby towns or neighborhoods.







Many animals make their homes in redwood trees. The threatened marbled murrelet—a small seabird—nests in moist forests such as the redwood groves off the coast of the Pacific Ocean. The female murrelet lays just one egg high in a redwood tree on a small mat of moss. Other animals can spend their entire lives in the redwood trees. One such animal, the wandering salamander, glides from one tree to another and may never touch the ground. Redwoods are a valuable resource to our biosphere!





# MONKEY PUZZLE TREES



When we hear of national monuments, we often think of grand geological wonders, towering statues, or stately historical buildings. In the country of Chile, one national monument is a tree. The monkey puzzle tree is so special and endangered that, in order to protect it from logging, it was given this title.

A species of conifer, or cone-bearing tree, the monkey puzzle tree looks as strange as its name sounds. Its needles are stiff triangles that grow in a spiral pattern around branches that come out of the trunk in groups of five. Some say the needles look like reptile scales. With a trunk that looks like pineapple scales and a base that looks like an elephant's foot, the monkey puzzle tree got its name when a person said that climbing it would be a puzzle even for a monkey.





# AMONG THE LEAVES

*Among the Leaves* takes you on a trip outdoors and around the world to discover deciduous and evergreen trees and their essential roles in our ecosystem. Pairing fascinating, detailed descriptions with vibrant images, this book teaches you how these majestic trees have been a valuable resource to our biosphere for centuries. Grab a seat—or the branch of a willow—and immerse yourself in the beauty of trees.



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