



# FOCUS ON TREES



At this time of year, you may be seeing tiny plants growing on your front lawn or rising out of a garden pot from your balcony or cracks in the sidewalks as you walk in your neighbourhood.

In this Nature at Home series, we will concentrate on the special features of trees.

Growing from a little package of energy, surrounded by soil and sunlight my small leaves appear. I am either a deciduous or coniferous tree seed. The type of leaves that I grow will tell you this. If I have spikey, needle-like leaves I am a coniferous tree and if I have flat, wide leaves that will fall off before the winter, I am a deciduous tree.

Most of Canada's provinces and territories have a tree as one of their symbols. In Ontario, the provincial tree is a coniferous tree that has 5 long needles on each leaf-set. Coniferous trees produce cones which are important as a wildlife food source and for starting up a new tree. This 5-leaf needle tree is the Eastern White Pine.

The other provinces and territories have the following tree species as their provincial tree choice: British Columbia: Western Red Cedar; Alberta: Lodgepole Pine; Saskatchewan: White Birch; Manitoba White Spruce; Quebec: Yellow Birch; New Brunswick: Balsam Fir; Prince Edward Island: Red Oak; Nova Scotia: Red Spruce; Newfoundland & Labrador: Black Spruce; Yukon: Subalpine Fir; Northwest Territories: Tamarack; Nunavut: Has yet to decide its provincial tree choice.

What is the tree leaf on our Canadian Flag? We know it is from a deciduous tree, and the shape tells us that it is from the maple family, but what type of maple is it? Here are some choices: Does the flag show a Striped Maple, Black Maple, Red Maple, Sugar Maple; White Maple; Silver Maple; or Manitoba Maple?

Can you name six requirements needed for trees to survive?

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_

What is the tree leaf on our Canadian Flag? The answer is Sugar Maple. Canada is world famous for its production of maple syrup and the sweetest sap comes from the sugar maple tree. The sap is collected before the leaves appear, in late February into March, and then boiled down without any additives until it is a delicious syrup. It takes forty litres of sap to make one litre of syrup. A lot of work but the results are so yummy! Note: All living trees produce sap as this is the energy the tree needs to make leaves.