

THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

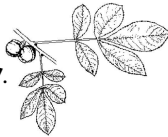
Forest Forays Activity Sheet #2

Biodiversity—the variety or diversity of living things in an environment—is an important indicator of the health of an ecosystem. Ecosystems with greater biodiversity are generally healthier than those with less biodiversity. Work with a partner and use the key below to classify the leaves from trees in a small area of the Forest.

Key to the trees of the Forest

1. If the leaf is simple, go to 2.

If the leaf is compound, it is a **Hickory**.



2. If the leaf has no lobes, go to 3.

If the leaf is lobed, go to 6.

3. If the margin of the leaf is continuously toothed, go to 4.

If the margin of the leaf is smooth, not toothed at all, it is a **Persimmon**.



4. If the base of the leaf is symmetrical (the same on either side of the stem), go to 5.

If the base of the leaf is asymmetrical (different on either side of the stem), it is an **American Elm**.



5. If the teeth along the margin are widely spaced, it is a **Beech**.

If the teeth along the margin are fine and close together, it is a **Choke Cherry**.



6. If the margin of the leaf is continuously toothed, go to 7.

If the margin of the leaf is smooth, not toothed at all, go to 9.

7. If the teeth along the margin are pointed, go to 8.

If the teeth along the margin are rounded, it is a **Mulberry**.



8. If the leaf is star shaped and has five lobes, it is a **Sweetgum**.

If the leaf has three large lobes, it is a **Red Maple**.



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Forest Forays Activity Sheet #2 (cont'd)

9. If the veins are pinnate, go to 10.

If the veins are palmate, it is a **Sugar Maple**.



10. If the tips of the lobes are pointed, go to 11.

If the tips of the lobes are rounded, it is a **White Oak**.



11. If the leaf has four or six points, it is a **Tulip**.

If the leaf has more than six points and becomes narrow at the top, it is a **Red Oak**.



Keep track of your leaf identification data:

How many leaves did you identify? _____

How many different kinds of trees did these leaves come from? _____

Which type of tree did you identify the most? _____

Which type of tree did you identify the least? _____

Compare your data with another pair of students in your class. How is your data similar to theirs? _____

How is your data different? _____

What does your data say about the biodiversity of trees in the Forest? _____

Other than examining leaves, how else could you identify trees? _____
