



Nature in the city Scavenger Hunt

Learn about nature while you explore your local ravine or forest. All of these treasures should be visible from the official trails - there is no need to trample plants or frighten animals by wandering off trail. Please do not pick any flowers or leaves, or chase any critters you might see. The best way to protect nature is to leave it alone!

Native Species



Native plants & animals have lived here for thousands and thousands of years. Over this time they have become a vital part of their ecosystem, co-existing in harmony with other native species, and providing food and habitat for a variety of bugs, birds, and other animals.

Invasive Species



Invasive plants & animals did not originate here, and their presence causes damage to the local ecosystem. Without natural predators to control their spread, invasives outcompete native species, threaten biodiversity, and reduce the food and habitat available to bugs, birds, and other animals.

Built Features



Protecting nature in a city like ours sometimes requires a helping hand. From trails to bat boxes, our natural areas often shows signs of this human stewardship.

Native Species



Find at least **TWO** of the following native species:

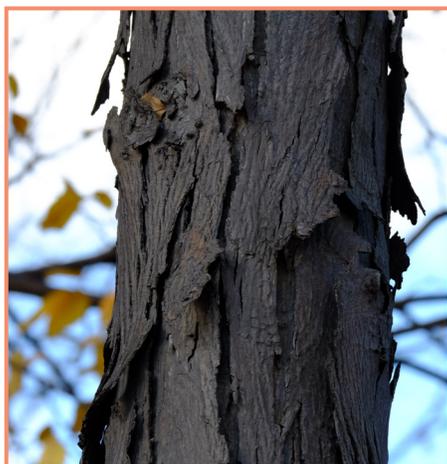


EASTERN WHITE PINE

Red pine and white pine look really similar but red pines sprout clusters of two needles while white pines sprout clusters of five. An easy way to remember? "white" has five letters, just like the number of needles.

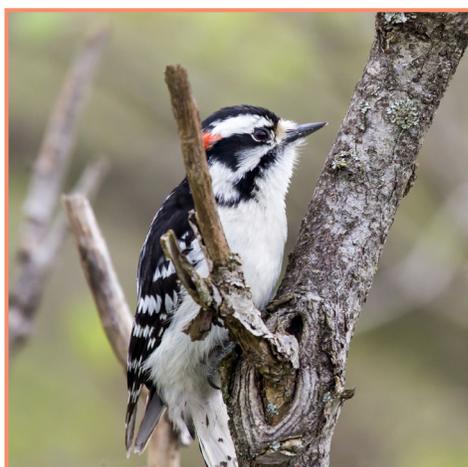
MALLARD DUCKS

These ducks are easily spotted in rivers, creeks, and ponds all across the city. Never feed bread to ducks! It fills them up but offers very little nutrition, leading to poor health.



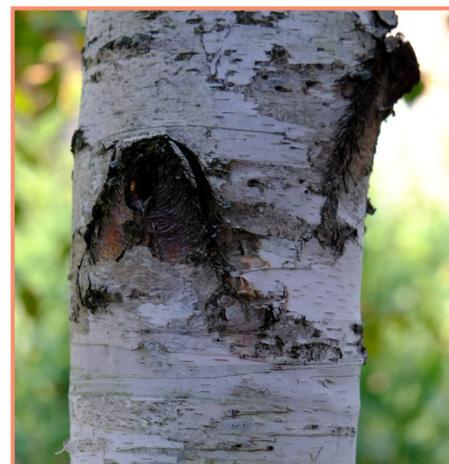
SHAGBARK HICKORY

The sweet-tasting nuts of this tree are a treasured food source for squirrels, raccoons, chipmunks, foxes, rabbits, and a variety of birds!



DOWNY WOODPECKER

Downy's are the most common woodpecker in the city and can be found here all year round. Their small size allows them to hunt for food on much smaller trees than any other native woodpecker.



WHITE BIRCH

Birch are a "pioneer species," meaning they are some of the first trees to grow in locations disturbed by things like wildfire. They are also valuable hosts to a variety of butterflies, and moths.

Invasive Species



Find at least **TWO** of the following invasive species:



COMMON TEASEL

This plant originates from Europe, Asia, and Africa and was likely brought to North America almost two-hundred years ago for use in textile making. Since then it has spread wildly, and can now be found in many of Toronto's natural areas.



PHRAGMITES

This water-loving reed is considered one of our worst invasive species. Phragmites provide little habitat value, crowd out other species, lower water levels, and kill other plants by releasing toxins from their roots!



COMMON BURDOCK

Burdock's familiar burrs get stuck to your clothes (or your dog's fur) - a minor a nuisance to remove. They pose a major problem to small birds, however, whose feathers can get tangled in them, leading to loss of flight or worse, death.

JAPANESE KNOTWEED

Sometimes mistaken for bamboo, this invasive species is so tough it can actually grow right through concrete and asphalt!



Built Features



Find at least **TWO** of the following features:



ARMOURSTONE

These large stones are used to protect waterways and shorelines from erosion.

DOGS ON LEASH SIGN

Off-leash dogs can scare wildlife, disturb nests, interrupt hunting and breeding, threaten rare & endangered species, damage native plants, and spread the seeds of invasive species! Please, keep your furry friend on a leash!



TREE GUARDS

These plastic shields protect young trees from being eaten by wildlife like rodents and deer.



BIRD BOXES

Buildings and homes have taken the place of trees and shrubs all around the city, making it hard for some birds to find a suitable home. Bird boxes offer some species a safe place to nest.

TFN members enjoy many benefits: over 100 guided nature walks each year, 8 issues of our informative newsletter, citizen science and stewardship opportunities, free lectures by noted experts, and so much more. Memberships start at only \$10 a year! Learn more at torontofieldnaturalists.org/join.

