

Going on a Cone and Conifer Hunt

Quest:

Get outside and find Douglas fir, western hemlock and western redcedar trees and their cones. Use the pictures below to help you on your quest. Then try to find all the things in the table. When you 're done you'll be able to impress your friends by pointing out the cones, naming the trees, and maybe explain that the **strobilus**' job is to protect naked seeds.

Directions:

Review the plant identification cards from Washington Native Plant Society Starflower Resources, then complete the checklist. <https://www.wnps.org/starflower>



Leader

Western hemlock has a distinctive drooping leader which is visible from a distance.

This evergreen tree grows 180' tall.

Brown cones are 3/4" long with open scales. New bud growth occurs in spring.

Feathery, drooping boughs.

Needles vary from 1/4"-5/8" long and lay flat along stem.

Western Hemlock
Tsuga heterophylla

PNW Native Plant PPMC: 30 © Starflower Foundation 2006

Mature bark is dark brown, rough, and grooved. Young bark is green-brown and smooth.

This evergreen tree can reach 210' tall.

Needles are arranged like a bottlebrush with brown buds.

Green to reddish-brown cones have bracts that protrude from under scales like a 'mousetail.'

Douglas Fir
Pseudotsuga menziesii

PNW Native Plant PPMC: 32 © Starflower Foundation 2006

Archiving boughs spread in a J-shape.

This evergreen tree can reach 180' tall.

Leaves are flat and scaly, arranged in a braid-like pattern.

Green to brown cones are 1/2" and oval, with 8-12 scales.

Bark is reddish-gray, and shreds in long strips.

Western Red Cedar
Thuja plicata

PNW Native Plant PPMC: 42 © Starflower Foundation 2006



Cone Hunt Checklist	
Find a cone that...	
Hangs upside down	<input type="checkbox"/>
That sits on top of the branch	<input type="checkbox"/>
That is twice as long as it is wide	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is smaller than your thumb	<input type="checkbox"/>
Still has seeds inside	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hasn't opened up yet	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has no seeds left inside	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has sap on it	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has fallen to the ground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has been partly eaten	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can become bird feeders	<input type="checkbox"/>