

OLD GROWTH SCAVENGER HUNT

Get ready for an adventure into an old world!
 Local Indigenous people lived with these forests for many thousands of years, and trees have been towering here long before European settlers arrived. When you step into an old growth forest, pause to notice the special feeling this ancient space creates, and breathe in the clean rich air. Take the time to be present and mindful and experience the wonders of an old forest.



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Old growth forests support people, communities, jobs, plants and animals. They help protect our clean drinking water and are critical to biodiversity. They are a huge reservoir for carbon and are a key part to our success in avoiding the worst consequences of climate change. Sinixt Peoples believe that we must leave things the same or better than how we found them for future generations. This is the highest law of the Sinixt, the whuplak'n (whup-lock-en), the law of the land.



1. Western Redcedar (*Thuja plicata*)
Growing up to 60 metres when mature with drooping branches, twisted fibrous bark, and a trunk often spreading out at the base. This large coniferous tree can live over 1,000 years.



2. Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)
Reaching heights of 42 metres in the Interior, older trees have a long, branch-free trunk and a short, round and flattened top. The bark is smooth, grey-brown, with gummy resin-filled blisters when young, becoming very deeply grooved, with dark reddish-brown ridges.



3. Devil's Club (*Oplonox horridus*)
A sprawling, 1 to 3 metre tall shrub with thick, crooked stems and is covered in spines. Bears delight in eating large quantities of the abundant red berries in spring and summer.



4. Huckleberry (*Gaylussacia baccata*)
Pacific Northwest forests are home to several species of wild huckleberry. The huckleberry is a tall, bushy shrub, with oval leaves. The fruit is a blue-black berry and may be tart and are often made into jellies or pies.



5. Queen's Cup (*Clintonia uniflora*)
Part of the lily family, this low plant which grows in clusters formed by a large system of underground stems. Produces a single pure-white, star-like flower followed by a small, egg-shaped, metallic blue berry.



6. Northern Oak-fern (*Gymnocarpium dryopteris*)
Standing only eight or nine inches tall, the fronds are horizontal. Each stem is dark against the jewel-bright green of the leaflets. Oak fern's color deepens as the fronds mature, and turns a pastel yellow in late fall.



7. Western Goblin (*Botrychium montanum*)
This elusive fern prefers moist, mature coniferous forests. Not much is known about them, so be sure to take note if you find one! They only grow to about 5 cm and have one green leaf and clusters of nodules on a short stem.



8. Lichens (many species)
There are thousands of lichens in Canada. They are part fungi and part algae and an indicator of healthy air. They are an important food source for many animals. Look for bright to pastel green and brown hair-like buncnes in the branches of cedar, or for scrunched paper like green or brown growth on rocks and dead logs - it's likely lichen!



9. Chicken of the Woods (*Laetiporus sulphureus*)
This bright orange mushroom appears to glow in a dark forest. It is usually found on decaying logs and has a stacked, shelf-like fanned appearance. Mushrooms help recycle dead and decaying organic matter to be reused by other plants and animals.



10. Mycelium (many species)
A fascinating network of underground fungal roots connecting plants and trees to one another. These roots form countless pathways carrying nutrients, water, and carbon. If one tree is sick or damaged, a big healthy tree will send its own nutrients to help.



11. Red Squirrel (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*)
Feeding on the seeds and cones of evergreen trees, or bird eggs, berries, and fruit, they collect and hide seeds and nuts so they have food storage during the lean winter times. Sometimes they forget to dig up the seeds and unintentionally plant trees. Listen for a lengthy, their chatter and look for the bushy rust-red tail and white eye ring.



12. Banana Slug (*Ariolimax columbianus*)
This slug eats decaying leaves and other organic matter and turns it into rich soil so plants can grow. They can be bright yellow, green or brown, and often have brown spots like bruises on a banana. Watch where you step! They are one of the slowest creatures on Earth!



13. Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*)
A large, striking woodpecker with a red crest and white stripes on its head, and black body. They feed on insects by chopping square holes in trees. Sometimes the holes are big enough that other birds use them for nests. They prefer old forests with tree snags and big trees for nesting.



14. Northern Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*)
The Northern Spotted Owl is facing extinction here and is one of Canada's most endangered species. If you see one, please contact a conservation officer to help save its forest home. They rely on old forests to breed, feed, nest, and for protection from predators.



15. Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*)
A raven-sized, old forest-dwelling predator. Adults are brown to slate-grey on the back, while underparts are pale-grey with fine horizontal grey bars and darker vertical streaking. The head has a distinctive whitish line above the eye and a dark-grey to black cap. Due to habitat destruction, this species is at risk.



16. Chestnut-backed Chickadee (*Poecile rufescens*)
The smallest chickadee, sporting rich rusty-brown flanks and back. Listen for a scratchier, squeakier song. They prefer old growth where decaying and dead trees, snags and stumps for nest cavities are commonly found.



17. Bear (several species)
Bears can seem scary, and for good reason. But they are likely more scared of you and will leave an area if they sense humans. Look for piles of seed-filled poop on your path (they love berries). Look for big round footprints in the mud with five toes and long claws. Look for huge trees where a bear can burrow under for the winter!



18. Long Toed Salamander (*Ambystoma macrodactylum*)
This is a slender, dark grey to black salamander with, you guessed it, long toes! Specifically its 4th toe. It has a sticky poison secretion if it is threatened, and if a predator manages to take a leg or tail, it grows back!



19. Western Toad (*Bufo boreas*)
These toads are short and stocky and walk rather than jump. They range in colour from green to grey, dark brown, and red. They prefer moist environments and like the spongy soil of old forests to burrow in. They identify predators by recognising chemical cues, and ward them off by tasting bitter and making their tongue numb!



20. Nurse Tree (stump/log)
A wonderful attribute of an old growth forest, nurse logs form many functions. They are fallen trees which have turned into hosts of other plants and animals as they decompose. You may see young trees and shrubs sprouting, using the nutrients to grow. Mosses and fungi love the decaying matter which is often moist and spongy. If you scratch the surface, you might find a network of mycelium which works to transport water and nutrients throughout the forest.

A prepared adventurer is a happy adventurer!

Find a sturdy bag which is easy to carry and can hold the following things:

- Map and compass so you know which way to go.
- Notebook and pencil to draw & take notes.
- Magnifying glass and a ruler so you can see small insects or fungi and measure them.
- Small first aid kit.
- Small snack & water
- Always pack out what you pack in
- Bear spray. Usually bears are scared of you, and if you make noise as you're walking (singing or talking with your friend) you probably won't get to see one. Bears are an important part of the forest, and the forest is their home.



Scavenger hunting tips and tricks!

- 1) Have fun! You will see many plants and animals that are not on this list. Draw them and take notes - when you are home you can look them up and see what you found
- 2) If you come across an animal, or an animal's home, it is important not to disturb it. We are a part of nature, but this is their home and we respect others' homes
- 3) Use your sight, smell, hearing, touch (if safe) to fully experience the forest. If you take a moment to be still and quiet, you will be surprised with what you find
- 4) Look up, down, and all around! There are plants and animals, big and tiny, that support a healthy forest.
- 5) Don't eat anything unless you are with a knowledgeable forager.