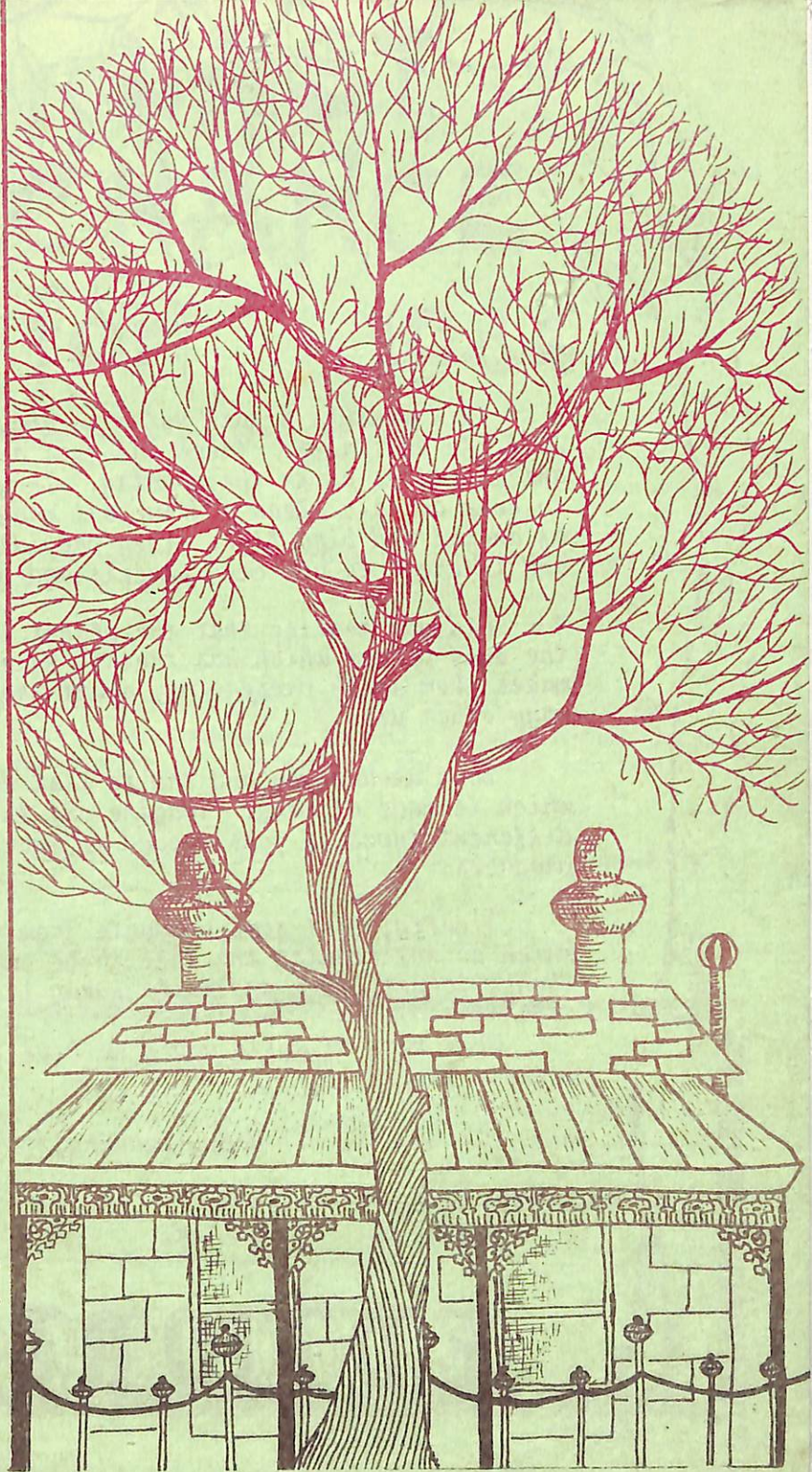


NATURE NOTES

VOL. 21 NO. 7 SEPTEMBER





Dear Readers,

This month's Nature Notes is about Urban wildlife and trees. Trees are just as important in cities as in the country. They help to keep our air clean and support many forms of animal and bird life. They provide beauty and interest to our city streets and parks.

Did you realise that the planet Earth is the only planet which has trees? Surely that makes them worth preserving, apart from their many other uses.

Look around you and try to list everything which is made of wood. Imagine all the different types of jobs needed to make those products.

Finally, list some products from trees which do not require the tree to be cut down. (Don't forget latex and maple syrup.)

What kind of world would we live in without trees?

Happy reading,

Rosalie Collie
Editor.

EDITORIAL

LAST CHANCE for 1984

to WIN A MYSTERY PRIZE and SEE YOUR NAME IN PRINT.

WHAT TO DO:

Write a story about an interesting or funny event that you have had with a pet.

OR

Write a story about a pet that you would LIKE to own. It can be a real or an imaginary animal. Describe what it looks like, what it eats, and some of the things you would do together.

Entries close October 31st. Winners will be announced in the December issue.

Remember Wally looks for originality!

COMPETITION ENTRY FORM

NAME: _____

AGE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

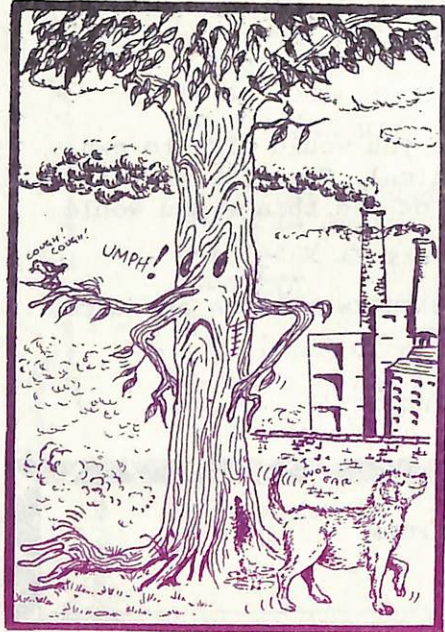
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It's a TREE'S LIFE

Hello there!

I'm the tree on the corner block near your house. Come and visit me when you walk to school one day. I could tell you many stories about the neighbourhood.

When I was born - a hundred years ago - my mother said I'd live to a ripe old age because I grew so quickly and strongly. I had beautiful glossy green leaves and extra long thick roots, reaching out to suck up the underground water. I loved to feel the water flowing up my trunk to my leaves, cooling them instantly. I was a greedy little tree. I believe water travels downwards in people. How strange!



In those days the air around was fresh and clean, but people came along with big noisy machines, and made roads and buildings all around me. They brutally pulled out my mother and brothers and sisters, and clumsily broke one of my branches. It bled a lot of sap. Now I have a scar on my trunk about two metres from the ground. Soon the air became smelly, dirty and often too thick to breath in. I felt as if I would suffocate! But most of all I hated the dogs who stopped at my trunk on their way past. Oh how I wished someone would move me to the country.

Over the years I have made many friends. There was a family of possums living in my branches for many years. (Most of them have moved away to escape the local dogs.) Olive Owl came every night to hunt. Numerous birds roosted under my thick foliage, dry and warm, and countless insects

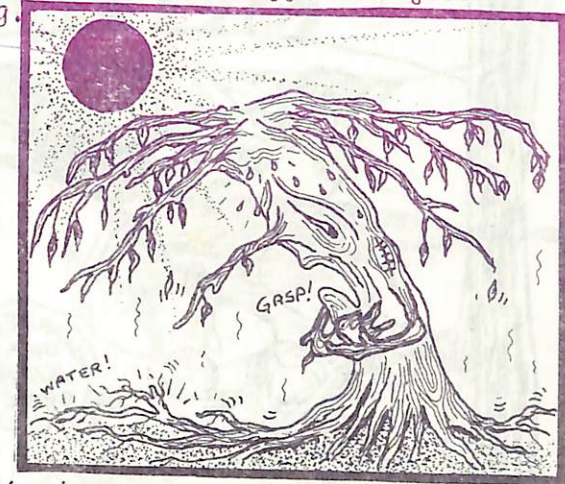
Illustrations for this article by Carol Measures.

in THE CITY

nestled under my tough bark.

I couldn't be sure who visited me in winter, because when the cold weather comes, my leaves fall off and I feel so tired I sleep until Spring. Of course when I wake up I feel great. There's nothing like a good long refreshing sleep.

I remember the year of the drought very well. My leaves were parched and dry. My branches limp. I was desperately struggling and gasping for carbon dioxide. People breath in oxygen, isn't that peculiar?



A passing Councillor noticed my sorry state and ordered truck loads of water to be delivered to me daily. It saved my life!

By the time the rains had come and washed the dust away, the people had decided to tear down the old factory on the corner block and make a small park around me. I was quite excited when I saw all the activity.

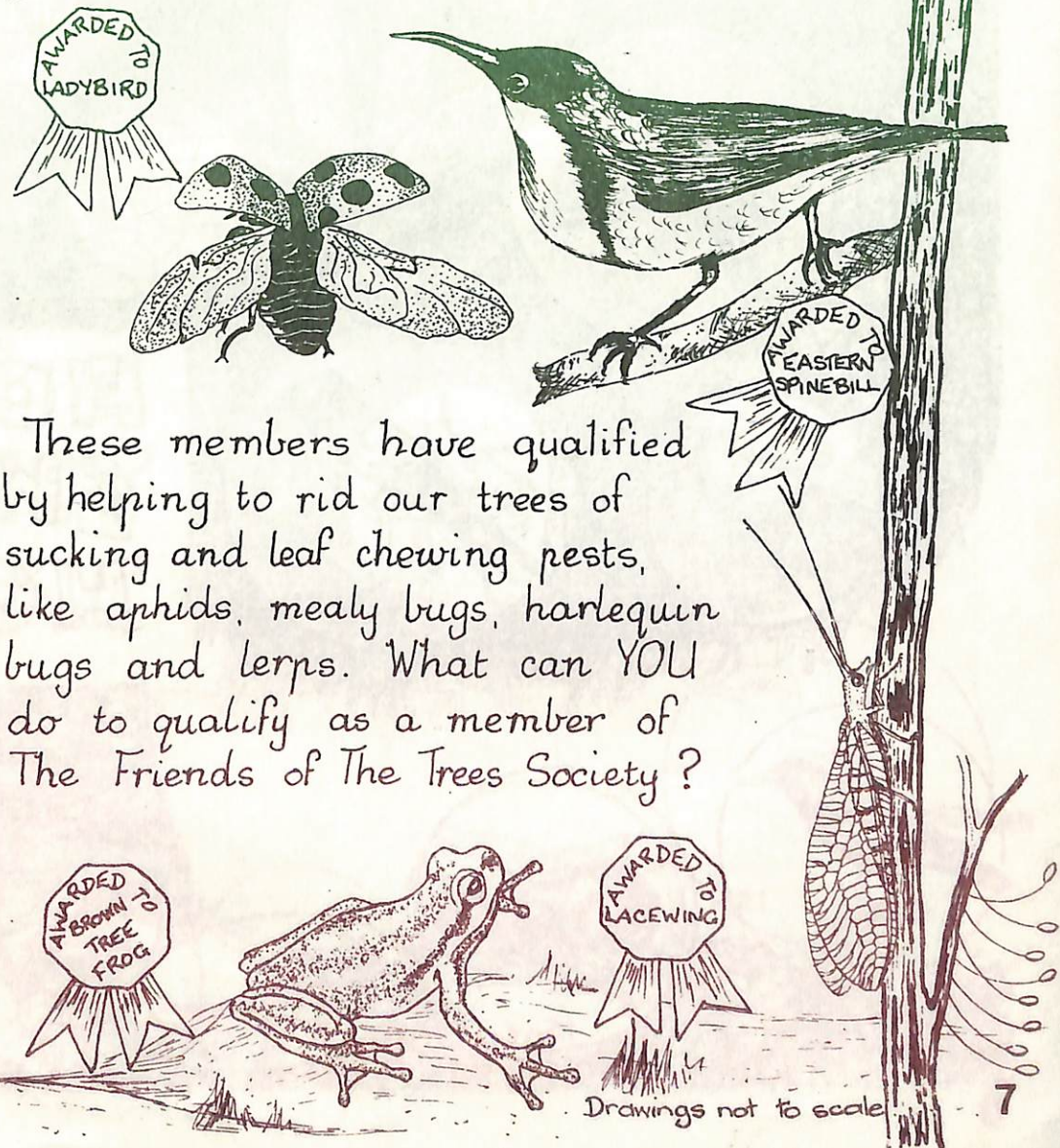


Now I'm old. My limbs are gnarled, knotted and twisted, but I'm happier than I've ever been. The birds and animals have come back to live in my branches, and people picnic on the grass around my trunk. I still suffer the visits of passing dogs when their owners let them off for a "run". (When will they ever learn?) But now I can see the sky and feel the rain and wind in my leaves.

Join the FRIENDS of



the TREES



These members have qualified by helping to rid our trees of sucking and leaf chewing pests, like aphids, mealy bugs, harlequin bugs and lerps. What can YOU do to qualify as a member of The Friends of The Trees Society?



HOME
SWEET
HOME



HOME SWEET HOME

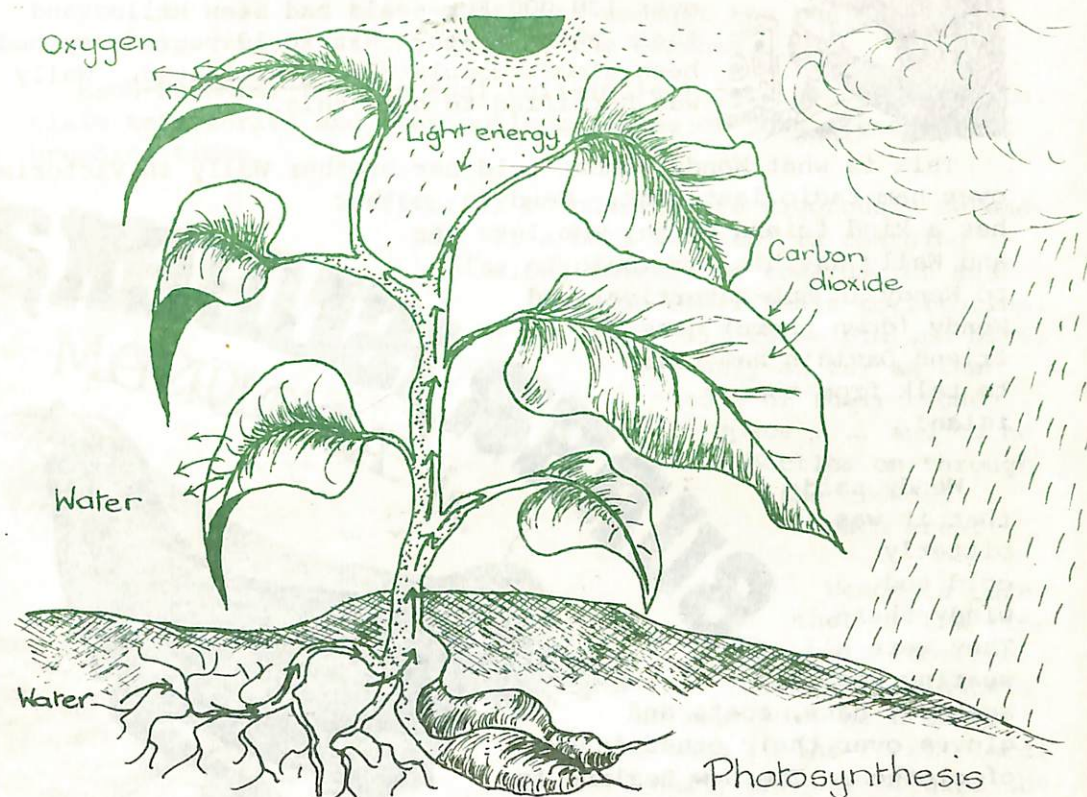
All of the creatures you see on the centre page, could be living in any one of the trees in your neighbourhood. Use this key to identify them. Then try to complete the table. (You may need to use your library.)

* Diurnal means active in daytime.

| No. | Name | Native or Introduced | Nocturnal or Diurnal |
|-----|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. | Bee | | |
| 2. | Cicada | | |
| 3. | Saunders' Casemoth | | |
| 4. | Brushy tailed Possum | | |
| 5. | Tawny Frogmouth Owl | | |
| 6. | Spotted Turtledove | | |
| 7. | Tree frog | | |
| 8. | Caterpillar of Monarch Butterfly (Larva) | | |
| 9. | Sparrow | | |
| 10. | Starling | | |
| 11. | Indian Myna | | |
| 12. | Ladybird beetle | | |
| 13. | Monarch Butterfly | | |
| 14. | Whitebacked Magpie | | |
| 15. | Snail | | |
| 16. | Earwig | | |
| 17. | Cockroach | | |
| 18. | Black Ant | | |
| 19. | Skink | | |
| 20. | Black field cricket | | |
| 21. | Silver Gull | | |
| 22. | Huntsman spider | | |
| 23. | Common Bat. | | |

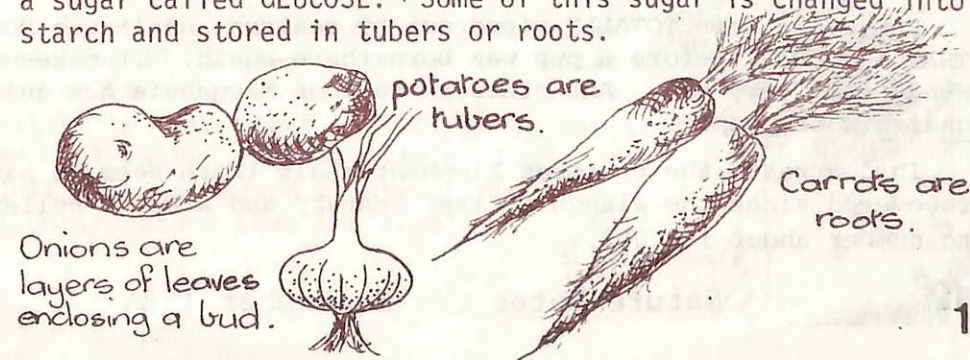


Nature's Food Factories



Photosynthesis

The green factories are the leaves of plants and the materials they use to make food are carbon dioxide and water. Leaves have breathing openings called STOMATA which take in carbon dioxide from the air and release oxygen into the air. The chlorophyll in leaves (the green colouring) absorbs sunlight falling on the leaves and through a process called PHOTOSYNTHESIS the leaves turn carbon dioxide and water into a sugar called GLUCOSE. Some of this sugar is changed into starch and stored in tubers or roots.





Wendy, what color are fur seals?

Did you know that in the first 18 months after Macquarie Island had been discovered, over 120,000 Fur seals had been killed and their skins taken? Within 10 years they had been almost completely exterminated. Wally was horrified to hear this.

This is what Wendy Wombat told her brother Wally in Victoria over ham radio last week. Wendy's mother has a kind friend Brian, who lets her and Wally use his ham radio to talk to Wendy in Sub-Antartica; and Wendy (down there) uses her friend David's ham radio to talk from the island.

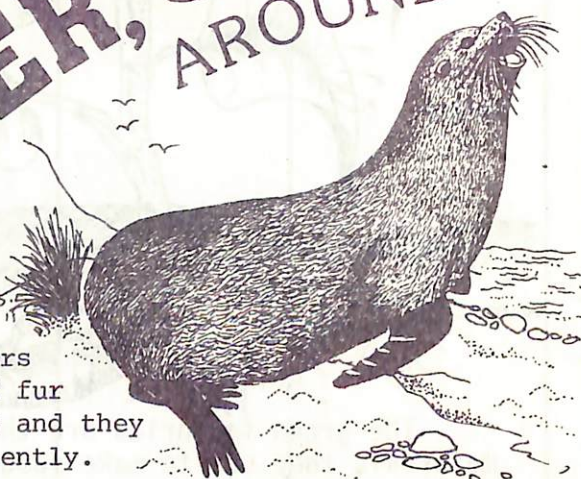
Wendy said that it was bitterly cold and windy there. They were all wearing woollen scarves, hats, coats and gloves over their other layers of clothes. The New Zealand fur seals live close to the base and they are able to visit them frequently.

The effects of the years of exploitation are still evident in the fur seal population. Around 1,000 seals now use the island - but breeding is minimal; only 5 to 10 pups are born each year.

Fur seals were TOTALLY wiped out by sealers and it was MORE THAN 100 YEARS before a pup was born there again. It makes Wendy feel very sad. ALL other animals on Macquarie are quite unafraid of people.

In contrast, the enormous Elephant seals there seem to have recovered since the slaughter last century and are now believed to number about 100,000.

SUPER, SLEEK, AROUND



SMOOTH SEALS
MACQUARIE Is.



But Wendy continued with the story saying that they were rather clumsy on land, but in the sea they are agile and graceful.

Wendy also told Wally to tell us that the fur seals prefer to live on the rocky parts of the island's shoreline. She said they climb well and lie camouflaged amongst the boulders and giant kelp strands at the ends of the beaches.

Each November the fur seal bulls (males) come ashore first to claim territories and then collect harems of cows (females) at breeding times.

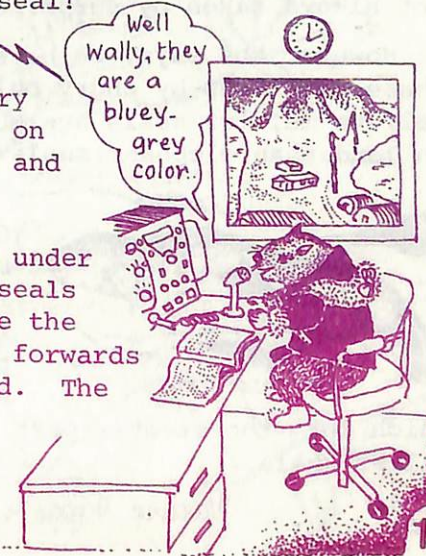
Territorial boundaries are vigorously defended. If a bull fur seal is charging along inland, or towards the sea through other seals' territories, they will chase him and bite; but only as far as the edge of their chosen space and so he battles on through the crowded beach area.

Wendy is sure that by the time he gets from one place to the other, he must wish he'd never had the idea in the first place! She told Wally she was SO glad she wasn't a seal!

Well Wally, they are a bluey-grey color.



It is possible for them to remain under water for 20 minutes or more. Fur seals have short external ears. They have the ability to turn their back flippers forwards and walk rather than wriggle on land. The adult male is around 2 metres long, slightly larger than the female.



SEALS around the island.

The pups are born early in December, a week after the mother comes ashore. They have a thick black coat that is shed after 2 months, for one more like that of their parents.

Families always live near protected shallow water, where pups can play and learn to swim. Some of last years pups are always ashore and will join in the play too.



Wendy also said the mother seals stay on the island for 4-6 months, nursing the pups until they are weaned. The mothers make short trips to sea to feed. Seal milk contains 45% fat which is more than 12 TIMES the fat content of human milk, which explains the fantastic 90 grams PER DAY growth rate of the pups! Super mums!!

Fortunately, little Wendy told Wally the bull fur seals have a distinctive and very strong smell, so if she or her workmates approach them up-wind they are not always taken by surprise!

However she says, we have all been chased at times by angry bulls and believe me, fur seals are MUCH FASTER on land than elephant seals! Poor Wendy.



Leopard Seal
which form the greater part of its diet. Its only enemy is the killer whale.

"Gibbo, HELP!...
there's a fur
seal after me."



Since 1981 the distinctive Yellow Chested Kerguelen species of seal has been seen on the island and an occasional visitor is the predatory Leopard seal that gets its name from the spotted appearance of the underside of its coat. It kills penguins,

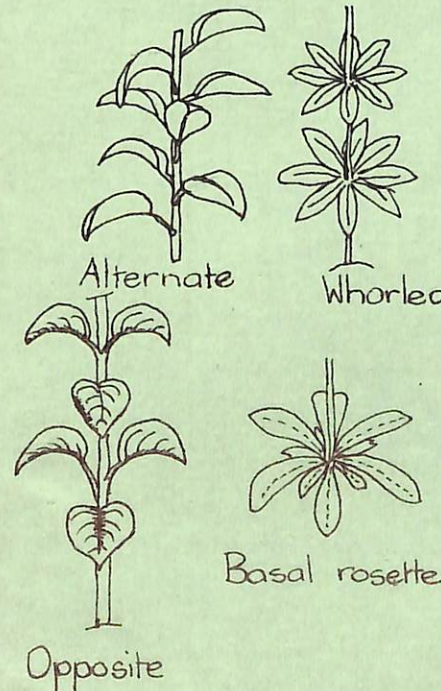
Leaves come in an incredible variety of sizes and shapes. But all leaves manufacture food. The veins on a leaf help support them as well as bring water to the leaf and carry manufactured foods away.

Leaves are arranged on different plants in different ways, but if you could see the tree from above, you would notice that almost every leaf gets the same amount of sunlight because they turn to face the sun.

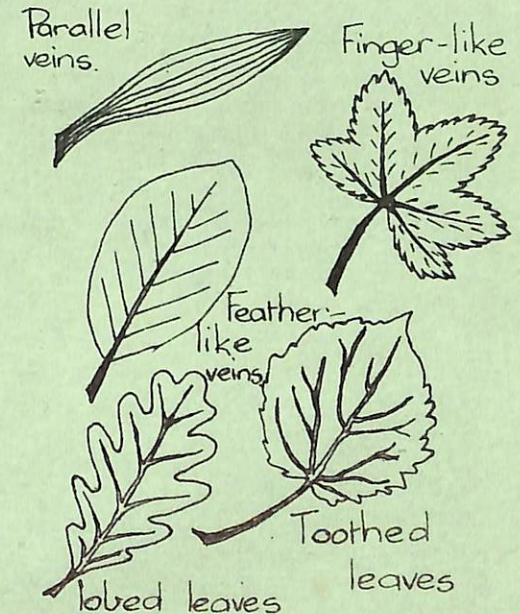
Another difference among leaves is that some broad-leaved trees have compound leaves - that is, a number of smaller leaflets attached to a central stem.

LEAVES

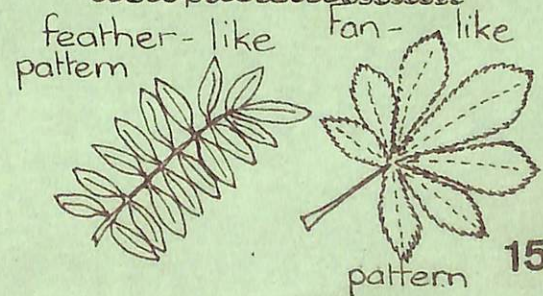
Leaf arrangements



Simple leaves



Compound leaves





PAUL'S

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