

CONCEPTS

Pre-visit activity • Cycle Two Travelling Fruit

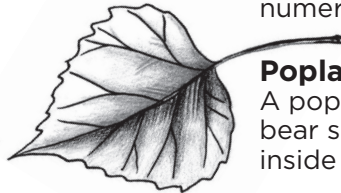
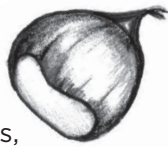
Most trees bear fruit, just like an apple tree and its apples, but sometimes that fruit comes in pretty surprising shapes. Every fruit contains a seed or seeds.

Fruit and seeds

The fruit protects a tree's seeds by helping them get dispersed by animals, the wind or water. When it rots on the ground, it also provides the seeds with a good growing medium. There are two types of fruit: fleshy and dry.

A fleshy fruit surrounds the seeds with a mass of flesh - which contains water and may be somewhat soft (a blueberry or serviceberry, for instance). A dry fruit, on the other hand, contains much less water and has a thinner outer layer (a nut, for example).

The seed is how a tree reproduces. Each seed contains a plant embryo and the reserves needed for a tree to grow.



Different types of fruit and seeds in Quebec trees



Chestnut

A chestnut is the edible fruit of a chestnut tree. It is a dry fruit. The prickly covering that protects the seeds (2 or 3) is called the capsule. The seed is surrounded by a reddish seed coat, with a small tuft at one end.

Maple

The fruit of a maple tree is called a key. It is a dry fruit. The oval seeds are coated in a thin membrane that forms two wings, resembling helicopter blades.

Oak

An acorn is the fruit of an oak tree. It is also a dry fruit. A small cup, or cap, covers the single seed, which is enclosed in a shell.

Pine

Like all conifers, a pine tree bears cones. Unlike deciduous trees, conifers have bare seeds, located at the base of the cone's scales. Pine seeds are tiny and winged.

Serviceberry

A serviceberry bears... serviceberries, which are small, fleshy fruit. With their purplish flesh and shape, they look like blueberries. The fruit contains numerous tiny seeds.

Poplar

A poplar produces fruit in the form of catkins that bear small oblong capsules. The seeds contained inside the capsules each have a tuft of cottony hairs.

