



BELLEVUE NEIGHBORHOOD TREE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Self-Guided Neighborhood Tree Tour

Created by Barb Williams

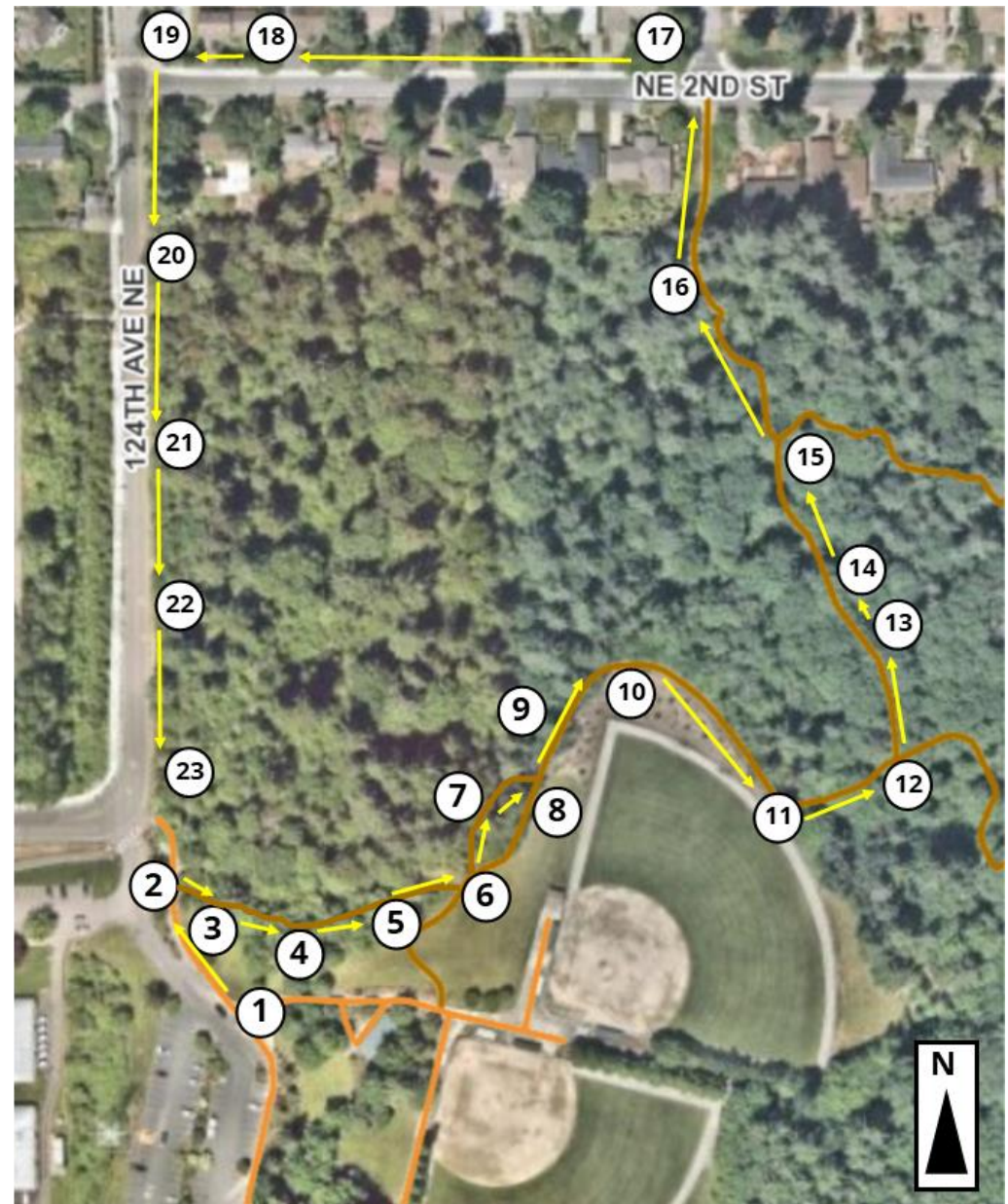
Neighborhood: Wilburton Hill Park and Neighborhood

Starting point: Wilburton Hill Park parking lot

Theme: Trees have been and continue to be an important part of Bellevue's history and the city's commitment to preserve a healthy environment for humans and wildlife.

"Trees are vital. As the biggest plants on the planet, they give us oxygen, store carbon, stabilize the soil and give life to the world's wildlife."

"Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago." - Warren Buffett





This tree tour was developed by one of Bellevue's Neighborhood Tree Ambassador volunteers. The goal of the Neighborhood Tree Ambassador program is to help build community support for trees in Bellevue.

Trees are an important part of our community because they provide significant health and environmental benefits. Trees:

- Remove pollutants from the air and water
- Reduce stress and improve focus
- Lower air temperature
- Pull greenhouse gases from the atmosphere
- Reduce flooding and erosion caused by rain

Bellevue has a goal to achieve a 40% tree canopy across the entire city. As of 2017, we are at 37%. Around two-thirds of Bellevue's existing tree canopy is in residential areas. By preserving and planting trees in residential areas, Bellevue's community members can make a big difference in helping to reach the 40% tree canopy goal.

For more information about trees in Bellevue or the Neighborhood Tree Ambassador program, please visit BellevueWA.gov/trees.

If you have questions or would like to share feedback about this tour, please email trees@bellevuewa.gov.



BELLEVUE NEIGHBORHOOD TREE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Welcome to the City of Bellevue Tree Ambassador Program. This tour will take you along trails through parts of the Wilburton Hill Park (a 73-acre public park) and streets of the adjacent neighborhood. There will be a very slight uphill section at the beginning as you follow the trail to the top of the hill overlooking the ballfields. The rest of the tour is pretty much along flat surfaces or downhill as you follow the woodland trails through the park, walk along the sidewalk at NE Second Street, turn left onto 124th Avenue NE and back to the Park parking lot where you started. The tour lasts approximately one hour and covers about a mile of distance. As you follow the tour route, notice ways that Bellevue has melded recreation activities for humans while preserving habitat for wildlife, thus providing a healthy environment for both. The City has worked in partnership with the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program that provided some materials in the park.



Black-tail deer



Coyote



Downey Woodpecker





Flicker







Raccoon





Stop #	Landmark	Discussion	Photo
1	Wilburton Hill Park parking lot, Giant Sequoia, Oak, Douglas Fir, Horse Chestnut	<p>Start your tour on the parking lot sidewalk where it connects to the path that leads to the restrooms and ballfields. Notice the planting of trees to beautify and shade the area. Look at the three conical (triangle) shaped trees in a row on your right and close to the sidewalk. These Giant Sequoias are rare and therefore protected; a reason they are often planted in parks such as Wilburton Hill. They originate in central California, can endure dry conditions, are an evergreen (retains its leaves/needles all year round), and are one of the tallest species of tree in the world growing to a height of up to 250 feet and typically living for 1500 years. The biggest one, General Sherman, is found in California, is 2,000 years old and 36 feet in diameter. Sequoias are insect, fire and disease resistant. Take 36 normal steps in a straight line to discover the width of the tree. Their perfect conical (triangular) shape is a joy to see.</p> <p>Just to the left of the Giant Sequoias, is a California Black Oak tree. To the left of the oak tree is a Douglas Fir tree. On it's left are three Horse Chestnut trees. Notice the leaf shape, bark and blossoms. In the spring, this tree exhibits beautiful conical-shaped clusters of ivory-colored blossoms with yellow centers which later turn red. Bees do not see red. Thus the theory is that when the blossom centers turn red, the bees/pollinators do not go there. The chestnuts (seeds) are protected by a prickly outer covering providing food for wildlife, but not humans. The Horse Chestnut tree can grow to 60 feet high and are deciduous losing its leaves in Autumn.</p>	 





		Look at the trees we have just discussed. Notice the variety of trees planted to beautify and shade the area. Turn left and follow the fence to Stop #2.	
2	Black Cottonwood tree	Just before you enter the trail to your right where the three posts sit, look to your left and notice the tall tree. What do you notice about this tree? How tall do you think it might be? How tall are you? How is it different from the trees you have just visited? It is a Black Cottonwood, native to this area, the largest deciduous (loses its leaves in winter) tree of the Northwest and the tallest cottonwood growing up to 160 feet tall and living for 250 years! Their ability to absorb lots of water through their roots, can help prevent erosion. Cottonwood trees provide habitat for birds such as Band -tailed pigeons that prefer tall trees. The buds produce a sticky substance used as a glue by local Native Americans. The white cotton produced by the flowers as they become seeds, floats through the air in spring carrying the tiny seeds to distant places and creating a spring cottonwood "snowstorm". The wood is used to make crates, pulp and veneer. The leaves turn yellow in autumn giving the tree a sunny look.	 


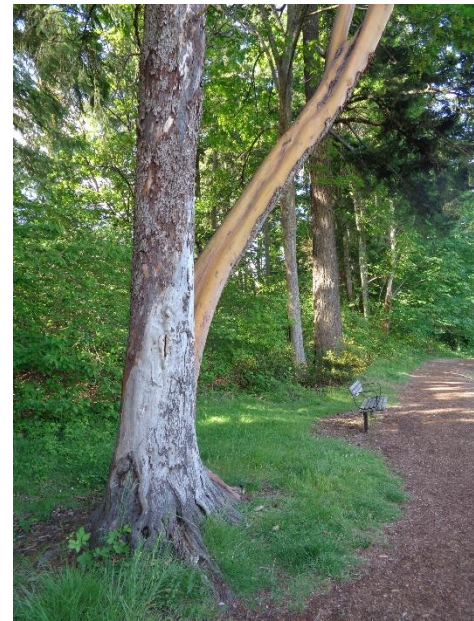
3	Hazelnut	<p>A short distance beyond the Cottonwood, look right and left along the path to see the Hazelnut which is indigenous (native) to this area. In early spring they produce long catkins that hang from the branches like tassels. The male catkins are yellow while the females are tiny with red hairs at the tip of the bud. The leaves are soft and heart-shaped. Notice the sweeping branches making an arch. Local Native Americans used the branches to make snowshoe frames, baskets, fish net poles and brooms. The seeds/nuts produced in late summer are hard to find because they are well camouflaged wrapped in fuzzy green leaf packets. They provide food for animals such as the chipmunks, birds and squirrels that live in this park.</p>	
4	Western Red Alder trees	<p>As you proceed up the trail, notice the grove of Western Red Alder trees to your right and left. The straight trunks have grey bark. The leaves are oval with pointed tips and parallel veins. How many Western Red Alders do you see? Unfortunately someone has carved into the trunk of one of the trees on your left. The tree will attempt to cover the wound. If the carving had circled the trunk, this would kill the tree because the tree depends on the sap going up the trunk to feed it. Tree sap carries food from the roots up the trunk to the leaves. The leaves also produce food through a process called, photosynthesis. Together the roots, trunk and leaves produce food for the tree. Notice the reddish color of the bark at the wound. Native Americans boiled the bark to make a red dye. They used the wood as fuel for their fires. People still use Alder wood for fuel. Alders are one of the first plants to grow in a disturbed area. They are important in providing nitrogen to the soil; a chemical used by other plants.</p>	








5	Top of hill overlooking ballfields	<p>Walk uphill to the open space overlooking the baseball fields. Notice the sweep of trees from north to south and all the way to the lone pine on the top of the hill to the far south. These lands are part of the City of Bellevue. The city's goal is to have a city-wide tree canopy of 40%. Currently the tree canopy is 37%. Bellevue's Environmental Stewardship Plan contains actions to help meet this goal. In the 2020 plan, potential actions include: updating the tree preservation code and incentivizing residents to plant trees on their properties.</p> <p>When this seventy-three acre parcel of land was first acquired in 1974 and 1975, the Parks Department envisioned a multipurpose area park for human and wildlife use. This included opportunities for observing wildlife which the Department considered to be a recreational activity. Development of the ballfields did not require removal of many trees because this area was previously a farmland meadow. The two rows of trees between the two ballfields provide shade to lower temperatures and are a visual and physical screen. Notice the small Cottonwood tree on your left. Feel the leaves. How do they feel? (rough, smooth, soft) What shape are they? What color? Do you have a Black Cottonwood tree near your house? As you walk along the Tree Tour route, look for more Black Cottonwood, Hazelnut and Western Red Alder trees.</p>	 
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6	Black Hawthorn trees	<p>Look to your left. Notice the two trails that split. In the middle of the split there is a grove of Black Hawthorn trees. This tree is native to the Pacific Northwest showing whitish/pale pink flowers in early spring that turn to shiny black/purple berries in the fall ---- a food source for many bird species. This tree is also known as, Douglas Hawthorn, being named for David Douglas the scottish naturalist who discovered it. The leaves are relatively small with sharp sawteeth-like lobes. The branches have sharp thorns protruding from the wood. Native Americans used the long thorns in a game. The object of the game was to toss a Tule Reed ball onto the sharp point of the thorn. Tule Reed plants have long stems and grow in wet areas. The stems were rolled into a ball. Player #1 held the ball, tossed it and attempted to snag the ball onto the thorn held at a distance by player #2. Perhaps you could make a Tule reed ball and play the game. Take the trail on the left.</p>		
7	Western Red Cedar trees	<p>As you walk along the tree-shaded trail to the left of the grove of Black Hawthorns, notice the difference in temperature between the open space you have left and the shaded area you have entered. Tree shade often provides cooling. A few steps to your left, notice the Western Red Cedar trees with the swooping branches and shiny needles. They are evergreen trees (needles remain on the tree all year). Rub the top side of the needles from the branch to the tip of the needles. Then rub them in the opposite direction, in other words, from tip to branch. Do they feel the same? How do they feel? If you want to stay dry in a rainstorm, stand under a Western Red Cedar tree. The needles shed water very well. These trees are native to this area and were called "The Tree of Life" by local Native Americans who made houses, canoes, baskets, fish nets,</p>		

		ceremonial dress and so much more that supported their way of life. The wood is rot-resistant which makes it a good material for canoes and houses.	
8	Black Cottonwood tree, Douglas Fir trees	<p>A few steps further along the trail, notice two tall tree trunks on your left. How are they alike? How different? Do you think they are the same species of tree? Why? Why not? Look up the trunks. Can you see the tree tops? How tall do you think these trees are? How tall are you? How many of you do you think it would take to reach the top? Multiply your height by how many of you it would take to reach the top. In this way you can estimate the height of the trees. One is a Black Cottonwood. The other is a Douglas Fir tree which is not a true fir tree, but it is a true evergreen tree. It is a native to this area. Because of its long, straight trunk, it was used by settlers to make masts for sailing ships in the 1800s. Presently it is used for building projects. Notice the bark. It is thick, ridged and fire resistant. Can you find another Douglas Fir tree nearby? Can you find a fir cone? Look at the fir cone carefully while you listen to/read the story local Native Americans told based on their observations of the Fir cone and the tree bark.</p> <p>Story: In the early days ago when the world was very young, on the Earth there were giant animal Beings. These Beings were in the form of mice. One day the mice were playing in a field of tall grasses. Suddenly they smelled danger. They looked around and saw a small wisp of smoke rising above the dry grasses. Fire! They needed to find a place to hide as the wind blew the fire towards them. They looked around and all that they could see was a tall Douglas Fir tree. So they scampered over to it and partway up the trunk. The fire swirled around</p>	 




		<p>the base of the tree. They heard the crackle of the dry grasses as the grasses burned. They could see the red flames at the bottom of the tree. So they scampered up the trunk and out along a branch to hide inside the fir cone hanging from the end of the branch. Soon the fire moved away. It had not burned the tree down. If you look carefully at a Douglas Fir cone, you can see the tail and two hind legs of the mice as they are hiding inside the cone. Actually you are not looking at real mice but are looking at the bracts or seeds of the cone that Native Americans thought looked like the tails and hind legs of mice. Look carefully at a tree and make up your own story related to its characteristics.</p>	
9	<p>Bench looking east over ballfields, two madrone trees</p>	<p>Notice the two tree trunks before you reach the bench. How are they different? How are they alike? What do you notice about the trunks, the trees? They are both broad-leaved evergreen Pacific Madrone trees that are native to this area. In the spring they have bursts of white blossoms that turn to red berries eaten by many species of birds. Madrone trees are the tallest American member of the heath family which includes rhododendrons, azaleas and blueberries. They often grow on slopes and usually have a smooth reddish bark. Older trees exhibit a shaggy, grey bark. Which of these two trees do you think is older? Native Americans used the wood to make keels for their canoes because the wood is durable underwater. Look across the ballfields to the trees. Can you name/identify some of the trees? The tallest are Douglas Firs. Enjoy the view and think about how this park combines human recreational activities while preserving habitat for wildlife. Band-tailed pigeons, Great Horned owls, Bald Eagles, Red-tailed hawks, Pileated woodpeckers and Osprey make their homes here. As their habitat decreases due to development, areas like these</p>	



		forests are critical to their existence. Thanks to the City of Bellevue and its vision to protect this area, there are deer, raccoon, coyotes, bobcats and squirrels that live here. The tree cover not only provides good habitat for recreational and wildlife activities, it also prevents erosion of the hillside, provides oxygen and cleans the air we breathe. This park is a win-win gift to the people of Bellevue and those who visit.	
10	Young evergreen trees on the bank	Proceed along the trail. Notice the dead snag tree on your left. What do you notice about the trunk? The hole, or cavity, may be the home of birds such as Chickadees, Downey or Hairy woodpeckers, Red-breasted sapsuckers and Nuthatches that nest in holes like this one. The City of Bellevue has left these snags in place because of their use by birds and animals. The snags (old tree trunks) also provide nutrients to other plants when they rot and tumble to the ground. Insects that live in the tree provide food for other birds and animals. Turn to your right and look down the slope. Notice the many young evergreen trees that have been planted there. Can you name any of them? There are Douglas Fir, Western Red Cedar and Sequoia. They will grow up to provide shade to cool the ballfields. Their roots will help to prevent erosion of the steep slope.	
11	Pacific madrone trees, trailhead into the woodland	As you walk downhill along the trail that enters the woodland, notice the Pacific Madrone trees on your left and at the entrance to the woodland trail. Notice the bark on the trunk. Feel its smooth texture. Feel the leaves. How do they feel? Walk a little ways along the trail into the woodland. How is this different from where you have just been? Is there a difference in the temperature?	



12	Big Leaf Maple Trees	<p>Proceed along the trail to the City of Bellevue trail sign. Take the left turn towards NE 2nd Street. Notice the huge Big Leaf Maple tree with roots that anchor the tree to the ground while also providing nutrients to the tree. The large leaves collect sunlight from which they use a process called, photosynthesis, to produce food for the tree. Look way up to see the large leaves that form the canopy (top shape) of the tree. Because the tree is deciduous it will lose its leaves in the Autumn. The leaves turn a golden yellow and drift to the ground where they form a yellow carpet, decay and provide nutrients to the forest. Notice the mosses and Licorice Ferns growing on the trunk. In the Pacific Northwest, this tree carries more mosses and plants than any other tree. Local Native Americans used this tree to make canoe paddles, bowls and combs. As you walk along the trail to the next Stop, notice the old tree stumps to your right. They remain from the logging days. Stop at the third stump.</p>	 
13	Tree Stump	<p>Notice the old tree stump on your right. If it could talk, it could tell you some of the history of this area. Originally Native Americans made this their home. In the 1880s a small logging operation was begun on the nearby Mercer Slough. In 1901, Mr. Wilbur and Mr. England, started a company called Wilbur and England. They built a sawmill near today's 116th Avenue and logged old growth Western Red Cedar and Douglas Fir. A logging town called, Wilburton, was established to house company workers and their families. In 1903, the Northern Pacific Railroad built the Wilburton train trestle that is visible today on SE 8th Street. In 1905 the Hewitt and Lea Lumber Company took over the logging operation and built a logging railroad on the south side of Wilburton Hill. When the logging stopped in 1916, farms sprang up on the hill.</p>	





		<p>The trees you see here today are second growth trees, some of which could be 80 to 100 years old. Look about you and imagine its history --- a wild place for Native Americans followed in time by a logging operation that was supplanted by farms. Notice the colors, temperature, height of the trees, smells and sense of space. The variety of plant height and species is indicative of a healthy forest.</p>	A photograph showing a dense forest with various green plants and trees, illustrating a healthy second-growth forest.	
14	Old Tree Snag	<p>Walk up the trail to the tall dead tree snag on your left. It has several cavities (holes) in it. What animals or birds might use this hole? Small birds such Chickadees, Nuthatches and Saw-wet owls might use this for their home. Decaying tree trunks (snags) such as this one are often inhabited by insects making the snag a good "lunch spot" for birds such as Pileated Woodpeckers. Owls and mammals such as chipmunks live in cavities like this one.</p>	A photograph of a tall, dead tree snag standing in a forest, with sunlight filtering through the surrounding green trees.	
15	City of Bellevue sign post	<p>At the City of Bellevue sign post, go left to follow the arrow that points to NE 2nd Street. Follow the trail to the next stop.</p>	A photograph of a dirt trail in a forest, with a blue sign post visible on the right side of the path.	

16	Sitka Spruce Tree	<p>As you exit the woodland, notice the tall evergreen tree on your left. It is a Sitka Spruce tree that got its name from the Russian colonial capitol of Alaska. It prefers moist coastal forests and can grow up to three feet a year to a height of 160 feet. The needles have sharp points, are dark green, grow on all sides of the twig and are flattened with a ridge along the lower surface. The 2-3.5 inch long cones hang downwards at the ends of the branches. This spruce species is one of the tallest of its kind in the world. Because its wood is light and strong, it has been used to make boats, piano sounding boards and airplanes.</p>	
17	Pin Oak Trees	<p>Cross NE Second Street to the sidewalk on the other side. There you will find several Pin Oaks, members of the Black Oak and Beech tree families. They grow 70 to 80 feet tall and have many short pin-like twigs along the horizontal or downward-sloping branches, thus the name, Pin Oak. They are deciduous, losing most of their leaves in Winter. These hardy trees prefer moist soils and are often used in street and ornamental plantings. The shiny leaves are deeply lobed with sharp points at the tips. They are dark green on top, lighter green on the undersides and turn reddish-brown in the Autumn. The acorns (seeds) are a good winter food for animals such as squirrels, chipmunks and birds.</p> <p>As you walk downhill along the sidewalk, notice the tree line in the forest across the street. This is the forest land you have just exited. Preservation of this forest is part of The City of Bellevue's plan to retain a certain percentage of tree cover. Notice the tall trees. Can you identify them? Walk along the sidewalk to the next stop.</p>	 

18	Trees at House #12431	<p>Look across the street to house #12431. Notice the tall trees on either side of the driveway. Can you identify some of these trees? What do you notice about them? Look at the four trees on the left side bank. From left to right: Western Red Cedar, Douglas Fir, Western Red Cedar, Water Birch. On the right side of the driveway there are three more trees: (from left to right) a Lodgepole Pine tree, a Giant Sequoia and a Redwood tree. The Lodgepole Pine is commonly found in this area. It has three distinct geographical varieties: the Shore Pine that grows in wet soils, the Sierra Lodgepole Pine that is tall and narrow, and the Rocky Mountain Lodgepole Pine that is fire-adapted. How do you think such a variety of big trees grow in such a small space?</p>	
19	Arborvitae Hedge, Paper Birch Trees	<p>As you walk on the sidewalk to the corner of NE Second Street and 124th Avenue NE, notice the tall hedge of trees on your right. These trees are American Arborvitae. They are evergreen trees native to eastern United States, growing 40 to 60 feet tall. Landscape designers often use them as a green screen due to their upright shape and dense foliage. Across the street, you can see a grove of Birch trees. These are Paper Birch, called Canoe Birch or White Birch. Notice the tall slender trunks with white bark. They give an airy feel at the entrance to the front yard. Paper Birch are well-known in northern latitudes. Native</p>	

		Americans used the bark to make their birch bark canoes. The trees can grow up to 100 feet tall and have long catkins full of pollen in the spring. By Autumn, the catkins produce small seeds that are food for many bird species. These trees are deciduous. Turn left and follow the crosswalk across NE Second Street to the opposite side. Walk straight ahead on the sidewalk along 124th Avenue NE.	
20	Wilburton Little Free Library Box	Open the box to see if there are any books/magazines about Trees. This box is maintained by residents of Wilburton Hill. People can borrow a book/magazine and contribute one to the library.	
21	Redwood Trees	A short distance along the sidewalk, notice the trunks of the tall Redwood trees behind the fence. What do you notice about them? Look at the branches and needles. How are they different from other trees you have seen along the tour route? The Redwood tree is the tallest tree in the world. It reaches maturity at age 400 to 500 years old and can grow to a height of 200 to 325 feet. The oldest known Redwood lived to be 2,200 years old. Its genus scientific name, <i>Sequoia sempervirens</i> , is named for the inventor of the Cherokee alphabet, Sequoyah.	

22	Trees in the Forest	<p>Proceed straight ahead along the sidewalk leading to your Start Point, the Wilburton Hill Park parking lot. Look into the forest to your left. Downy Woodpeckers have been seen here feeding on insects in the old tree trunks. This natural area is home to many birds, animals and plant species. It would be a fine outdoor laboratory for the Wilburton Elementary School across the street because it has remained natural over the years providing people with recreational activities while continuing to be a vibrant habitat for wildlife. This is particularly unusual due to the area's proximity to Downtown Bellevue. It is with thanks to the City of Bellevue and its commitment to providing a percentage of tree cover and an environment that combines human with wildlife activities that this area remains the unique parkland that it is.</p>	 
23	Quaking Aspen Trees	<p>At the corner of 124th Avenue NE and Main Street, look across the street to see the tall slender grey trunks of the Quaking Aspen trees. The slightest breeze will cause the leaves (darker on top and silvery on the undersides) to twirl making a soft rustling sound. The leaves are nearly round with a sharp pointed tip. They turn yellow in the Autumn and fall from the tree. In Spring, pendulous catkins contain the tiny flowers and yellow pollen. Male and female flowers grow on separate trees. Now that you are back where you started, this concludes the tour. Please come back to the park and share what you have learned today with others. Thank you.</p>	