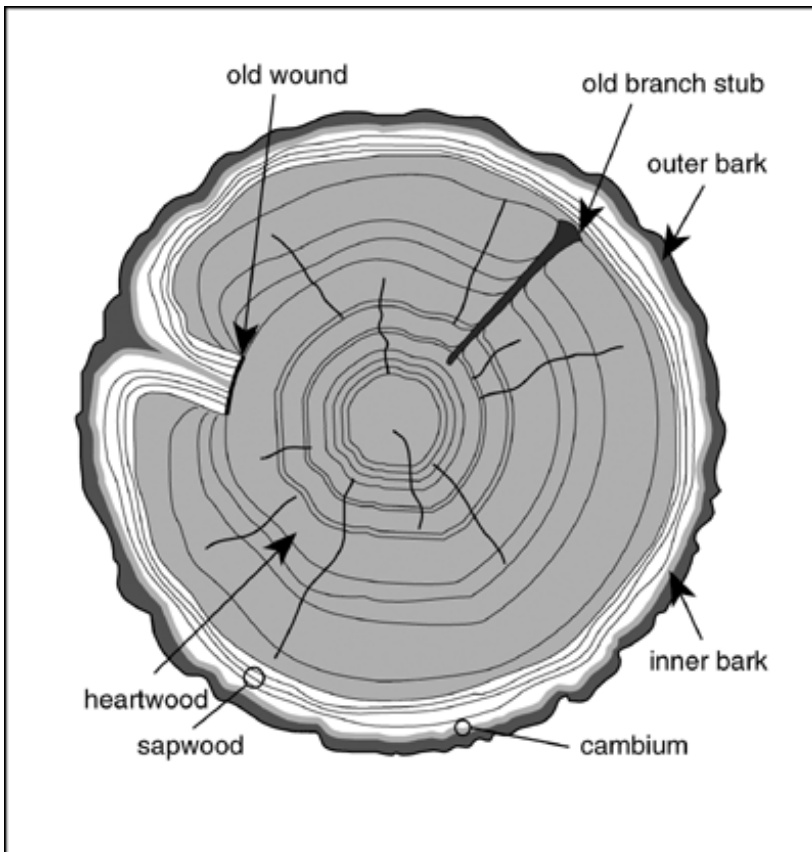


Friendly Forests

Tree Rings Tell a Story



Using the tree “cookie” to the left, answer the following questions:

1. How old is this tree?
2. How old was the tree when it was wounded?
3. What year did the branch break off causing the branch stub?
4. What year(s) did the tree grow the most? The least?
5. How many years did it take to grow over the branch stub?

<http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/uf/treeguidehtm/images/45b.gif>

A cross-section of a tree can tell us several valuable facts about that tree. We can see old wounds and branch scars. We can look at the growth rings of the tree to check its age and count backwards to see when the tree was planted. The growth rings also let us know how well (or poor) the tree grew each year. A wide ring lets us know that the tree had a successful growth year. Narrow rings let us know that the growth was affected by drought (lack of water) or insect damage. We can also observe the various layers of the tree:

Outer bark — Serves as protection

Inner bark — Carries food down the tree.

Cambium — Actively growing cells between the bark and the wood; new layer added each year.

Sapwood (new wood) — Moves water up the tree.

Heartwood (old wood) — Middle of the tree; less active.

Digging Deeper...

You try...

Your Life in Tree Rings

Using a white paper plate and crayons, create a tree “cookie” the same age as you are now. Be sure to mark important events in your life like when you were born, when you started school, etc.

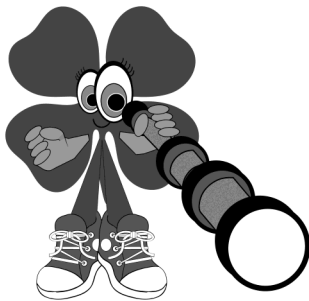
For more cool activities, visit:

<http://www.discovertheforest.org>



Did you know?

- The oldest tree in the world is a **bristlecone** pine, and it is 4,843 years old.
- The **TALLEST** tree is a **379.1-foot-tall coastal redwood**.
- West Tennessee was once home to the “World’s Largest Pecan Tree.”



Career Exploration

There are several careers that involve trees and forests. One of these careers is a **Forester**.

What does a forester do?

What skills are needed for this job?

If you enjoy learning about forestry, check out these 4-H projects:

Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries

Horticulture/Garden

Plant Science

