

Hello Trees Resource Sheet

What to look for outdoors in Autumn

Tree identification: larch



'Pupils should be taught to **identify and name** a variety of common wild and garden plants, including **deciduous and evergreen trees**.'

The National Curriculum Statutory Requirements Year 1 Science programme of study, Plants

Test yourself! Can you identify a larch tree?



Remember, there are 6 clues to tree identification: far too many for all at once. 3 of the clues are: **bark, branching** and **buds** (bbb).



The other 3 clues are : **leaf, flower** and **fruit** (fff).

Larch trees are conifers. Christmas trees and pine trees are conifers.



What shape are conifers?



Clue: the name reminds us of cones:



Conifers are shaped like upside-down ice-cream cones!



Or, to put it another way: conifer **branching** is conical.



Larch trees are conifers, conifers are conical, so let's look for a conical tree.



There is another thing you know about conifers.



Clue: think of the colour of Christmas trees.



Yes, they are green, even in the middle of Winter.



Most conifers are evergreens.

So, let's look for a conical evergreen tree. That way we shall find conifers.



But how will we know which conical evergreen is a larch?



When looking for larch trees in Autumn, there is another huge clue: **colour**.



Larch trees are one of the few conifers that is *not* evergreen.



So, let's look for a tree with leaves turning gold.

Here is a photograph of one in a park.

Have you found a larch tree?

Larch tree in autumn.



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Here is a photograph taken in summer.

It is of larch leaves next to the outline of a 5-year-old's hand.



What words would you use to describe the leaves: their colour, size, shape ...?



Would you agree that

- each leaf is a small needle,
 - the needles grow in whorls,
 - each whorl is smaller than the hand,
 - the needles grow straight out of the whorl base,
 - each whorl has a very short stubby base,
- Anything else?



The leaves in Autumn are still the same size and shape.



What words would you use to describe the colour now?



What else can you see on your larch branches?



Fruit is our other Big Clue to a tree's identity in Autumn.



We are lucky with larch trees: their fruit is tiny seeds held in cones. The cones stay on the tree for ages – sometimes years! So they are always there for us to see and help identify a larch.



Have a good look at the larch cones so that you will always know one when you see one.



Look down into it.

Turn it over and look at the patterns underneath it.

Fantastic!

And don't forget to look at the **bark** – look for spiders hiding on it. Nor the stubby little **buds**. What will come out of them?

We mustn't forget to look for the lovely larch **flowers** in Spring.



For much more about larch trees, see Hello Trees book 'Larry Larch' to be found at the [Hello Trees](http://www.hellotrees.co.uk) website – where there are lots of fun things to look for and do outdoors. And share what you have been up to on our [Facebook](#) page.