

Hello Trees Resource Sheet

What to look for outdoors in Spring

Tree ID: Smoking Pine Trees



 It is amazing to see pollen billowing out of male pine-tree flowers.



Look for a pine tree in a park or churchyard near you.



Find the male flowers.



Clues: Male flowers are at the base of new shoots.
Part of each flower will be yellow.



Flick the flowers. Out will waft pollen like a puff of pale-yellow smoke.



Stand clear! Anyone who gets hay fever will NOT want to breathe in pollen.

There really will be a cloud of pollen pouring out of the flowers and the wind will waft it around, so make sure you and everyone else stand clear.



How will we know we have found a pine tree?



Remember, there are 6 clues to a tree's identity:



bark, branching and **buds** (note the 'b' sound)





leaf, flower and **fruit** (note the 'f' sound)



There are about 100 species of pine tree.

Some clues tell us the tree is a pine, other clues help us decide which species of pine.

- Pine tree **bark**: different species of pine have different bark, scaly or grooved; pinkish, grey or brown. Bark does not help us decide whether a tree is a pine tree.
- Pine tree **branching**: pine trees are conifers. Perhaps you expect a pine tree to be Christmas-tree shaped. But not all conifers are cone-shaped. Pine trees come in many different shapes.  Guess what shape an umbrella pine is! However, all pine tree branches grow in whorls: rings of branches radiating from the central stem.
- Pine tree **buds**: different species of pine have different buds: small and pointed, large and fat, bullet-shaped or cylindrical. In Spring, buds will have developed into shoots.
- Pine tree **leaf**: pine leaves are needles. The needles grow in clusters of 2, 3 or 5. Each cluster is held together in a tiny papery sheath at its base. The needles grow straight out from the branch. 
- Pine tree **flower**: male and female flowers are separate and on the same tree: males at the base of new shoots, females at the tip.
- Pine tree **fruit**: pine tree 'fruit' is tiny seeds held in a cone.

Hello Trees Resource Sheet

What to look for outdoors in Spring

Tree ID: Smoking Pine Trees



Where, do you think, the pollen will go?



It is good if the pollen falls on female flowers.

If pollen falls on female flowers of the same species, the flowers develop seeds inside cones. It takes 2 years (3 years, in some cases) for the cones to ripen and release their seeds.



Look for cones and see whether you can tell how old they are.

Here are photos of a pine tree that grows on the hills of the Welsh Valleys – and near to me!



This pine is quite bushy.



Male flowers are yellow and pink.



Female flowers are bright pink.



Last year's cone is green-grey.



Brown cones from the year before last



An even older cone!



Let us know how you get on. Leave a post on our [Hello Trees Facebook page](#).

For more about trees, fun things to look for and do indoors and outdoors, and about Hello Trees books, see the [Hello Trees website](#).

Page 2 of 2

To find out more about trees, buy our books, discover fun things to look for and do indoors and outdoors, and more free to download resource sheets from Hello Trees go to www.hellotrees.co.uk

Don't forget to share what you've been up to and what you've discovered on our [Facebook](#) page