



# Create Your Own State Park Woodland Area

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A forest of trees or even a single tree provides important wildlife habitat in Maryland's State Parks. Planting a native tree or shrub in your park will also help provide food and shelter for wildlife, for insects, birds, reptiles and even mammals. Trees also provide many other benefits - they provide shade on a hot summer day; help filter runoff from excess rainwater and produce oxygen in the air we breathe! Plus, trees can help beautify your neighborhood.

## Did You Know?

- The Maryland State Tree is the **White Oak**.
- Maryland has a State Park named after an important tree- **Wye Oak State Park**. The Wye Oak was the largest white oak tree on record, both in Maryland and the nation. The Wye Oak fell in a storm in 2002 and was estimated to be nearly **500 years old**.
- Oak Trees support over **500 different types of caterpillars**- more than any other native tree or plant. These caterpillars are important food sources for birds.

## Activities

- Tree Inventory**- Take a close look around your park. Do you already have any trees or shrubs in your park? Try to find out what kind of tree(s) you have, using a field guide or identification app. Is it a native Maryland tree species?
- Plant A Tree**- If you don't have any trees or shrubs in your park, could you plant one? Do some research on native tree species and select a tree you would like to plant. Plant a tree, if you can!
- Tree Identification Signs**- Make signs or tags to help you to identify what type of trees you have in your park. Use clues from the leaves, bark and buds to help you to determine what kind of tree you have. You can use a field guide or identification app to help you. **Bonus Activity**- *Make a bark or leaf rubbing from one of your trees! See if you can find some twigs, acorns or other tree related items to frame your art!*
- Create a Brush Pile**- Brush piles provide important cover and protection for wildlife. Brush piles are a deliberate collection of brush or branches, sticks and other plant material placed over a supporting base or foundation. You can create one in your park using logs and sticks. The finished pile should be shaped like a dome with a maze of cavities inside.
- Create a Rock Pile**- Rock piles provide important habitat for smaller species, such as reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates in our parks. Many cold-blooded animals will use rock piles because they hold heat. Use a variety of sizes of rocks to create a pile that has lots of crevices that animals can access.
- Create an Amphibian House**- Use a clay flowerpot to make a "Toad Abode" for your park. Crack off a small section of the top of the pot to make an entrance, then turn the pot over and place it in a shady spot in your yard or garden. This will provide a cool, dark place for amphibians to hide. You may wish to decorate your pot.

