

Phenology Friday: Maple Tree

If you've been following our Phenology Friday, series you have learned by now phenology is the study of seasonal changes in plants and animals. If you are new, welcome! Each Friday we share with you a plant, animal or something relevant and then challenge you to head outside to search for and observe the topic of the week. So far we have looked for Robins, Meadowlarks, and Animal Tracks. This week's focus is the Maple Tree.

There are many kinds of Maple Trees each with unique features. One way to tell trees apart in the spring is by their growing bud. **Take a moment to look at the buds of different trees below:**



What color is the bud?

Are there hairs on the bud?

Is each bud growing alone on the tree or is more than one bud growing close together?

Is the bud covered with scales that look a little like shingles on a roof or scales on a fish?

Are the buds starting to open?



UTTC's resident Ethnobotanist, Linda Black Elk, was tapping boxelder maple trees in early March for sap that will be evaporated down to syrup.

Tip: If you live on campus, check out the taps in the trees along the walking trail behind the Admin Building. We believe this is the first sugarbush tap at UTTC!

Can you find a maple tree near your house?

Share with us what you find!

Tag your photos with @unitedtribestech or add your observations in the comments:

1. Where did you observe the tree?
2. How would you describe the bark?
3. What animals or birds did you observe around the tree?
4. What was the most interesting thing you observed when searching?
5. What cultural stories or knowledge have you learned about Maple Trees?