

# Identifying Local Tree Species in North Macedonia

## SUBJECT AREAS:

Natural science – Biology,  
Environmental Science

## ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

Mix of lecture, discussion, outdoor  
activity.

## OBJECTIVES:

Students will be able to identify  
some common tree species native  
to North Macedonia.

Students will be able to describe  
key characteristics used to identify  
trees (leaves, bark, flowers, and  
fruits).

Students will be able to appreciate  
the diversity of trees in their local  
environment.

## MATERIALS:

PPT, handouts, notebooks, pens.

## GRADE/LEVEL:

Secondary school (15-18)

## DURATION:

Preparation time: 10 min.

Activity time: 80 min.

## PLACE:

Classroom, City Park.

## AUTOR:

*Civil Society Organization Eco  
Logic - Republic of North  
Macedonia*

## INTRODUCTION:

Show students a variety of pictures of trees and ask them to identify any they recognize. Introduce the lesson topic and planned activity in the City Park: "Today we'll become tree detectives! We'll learn how to identify some of the amazing tree species that grace the landscapes of North Macedonia by observing their leaves, bark, and other features.

## BACKGROUND:

Common Tree Species in North Macedonia:

**Beech:** Beech trees are known for their smooth grey bark and oval, green leaves with wavy edges.

**Oak:** Oak trees are recognized by their lobed leaves and rough, bark with vertical fissures.

**Pine:** Pine trees are evergreen conifers with needle-like leaves and cones that produce seeds.

**Maple:** Maple trees have distinctive lobed leaves that turn vibrant colors in autumn (red, orange, yellow).

### **Identifying Trees:**

Several key characteristics can help us identify tree species:

Leaves: Observe the shape, size, margin (smooth or toothed), and vein patterns of the leaves.

Bark: Look at the texture (smooth, rough, furrowed), and color of the bark.

Flowers and Fruits: If present, the flowers and fruits can provide additional clues for identification (consider seasonality).

### **Activity:**

Take students outside, ideally to the City Park (weather permitting) or schoolyard. Distribute handouts with descriptions and illustrations of identifying features.

Guide students in small groups, helping them identify trees based on the characteristics learned in class. Encourage them to observe details, compare with handouts, and discuss their findings.

## FUN FACTS:

- *The city of Ohrid boasts a legendary tree called the Chinar, estimated to be over 900 years old! Locals revere it as a landmark and a symbol of the city's long history.*
- *Pelister National Park is home to a unique pine subspecies called the Molika pine. These pines can grow incredibly tall and straight, and their wood is prized for its exceptional quality.*
- *Juniper trees are found in mountainous regions of North Macedonia. Their berries are a key ingredient in gin, a popular spirit. The juniper berries add a distinct flavor and aroma to gin, and different juniper species can contribute unique taste profiles. Many gin companies outsource the juniper berries from North Macedonia.*

## ASSESSMENT:

Back in the classroom, have students share their experiences from the outdoor activity.

Assessment can involve participation in class discussions and observations during the outdoor activity.

Ask students to create a nature journal with drawings or pictures of trees they identified, along with notes on their characteristics.

## EVALUATION:

Reflect on the effectiveness of the lesson by considering student engagement, understanding of the concepts, and completion of the assessment tasks.