TREE BEE

COORDINATOR'S GUIDE

Bring a Tree Bee competition to your city, school, or club. This guide highlights the roles and responsibilities of regional Tree Bee coordinators and provides instructions on how to host a successful event.

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this guide is to:

• Inspire you to bring trees and forests to your community through the Tree Bee program,

• Outline roles and responsibilities of Tree Bee volunteer coordinators,

• Address frequently asked questions.

ABOUT US

Tree Bee

Tree Bee is an education tool that encourages students to learn about tree identification and general forest knowledge. Teachers bring the Tree Bee experience into their classrooms through activities, presentations, and educational resources. Tree Bee is a great opportunity to get kids excited about trees, forests and nature.

Visit: www.treebee.ca

Forests Ontario

Forests Ontario is dedicated to the renewal and stewardship of Ontario's forests. Forests Ontario was created as a result of the merger of two not-for-profit organizations: Trees Ontario and the Ontario Forestry Association (OFA). Forests Ontario is the voice for our forests. We are a provincial resource and trusted authority for those seeking to invest in the future of our forests - through donations, sponsorship, volunteerism, tree planting, community awareness events and forest management.
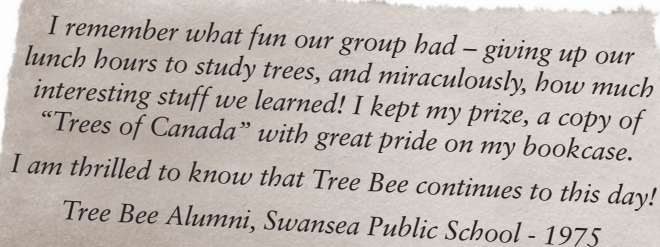
Visit: www.forestsontario.ca

TREE BEE COORDINATOR'S GUIDE

What is Tree Bee?

Tree Bee introduces communities to the trees in their own backyards. Through online resources and activities, schools, families and forest enthusiasts are encouraged to get outside and explore.

Through Tree Bee, Forests Ontario provides educators with teaching resources including factsheets and, lesson plans, that can be used throughout the year to connect students with nature and foster a meaningful and lasting connection to our forests.

Where there is community support, Tree Bee can also feature a friendly competition during which students work collaboratively to identify tree species using images of prominent features such as leaves, bark, buds and fruit. Additionally, teams are challenged to answer a series of multiple choice questions related to forests and forest management.

I remember what fun our group had – giving up our lunch hours to study trees, and miraculously, how much interesting stuff we learned! I kept my prize, a copy of "Trees of Canada" with great pride on my bookcase. I am thrilled to know that Tree Bee continues to this day!

Tree Bee Alumni, Swansea Public School - 1975
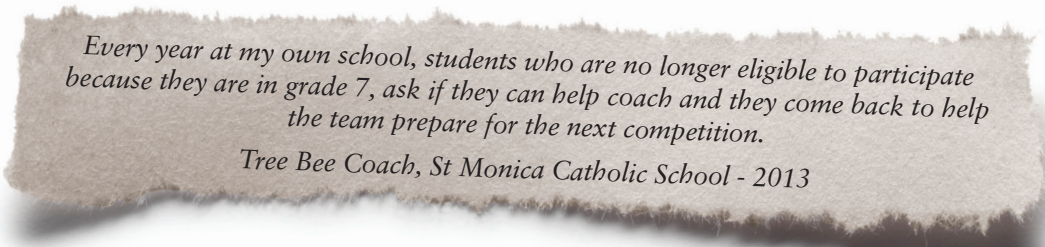
Learning Objectives

Tree Bee is an engaging, interdisciplinary program which capitalizes on children's inherent fascination with nature. The key learning objectives of Tree Bee are:

1 To increase students' awareness of forest management and forest ecosystems

2 To increase students' knowledge of, and ability to, identify common tree species

3 To highlight the historical and current importance of forestry to Canada's economy

4 To develop students' understanding of the ecological goods and services provided by forests

5 To foster an appreciation for local and national green spaces

6 To engage students in cooperative learning opportunities and develop teamwork skills

Competition Format

Within the GTA, a popular Tree Bee competition has run for over 60 years with volunteer support. The Tree Bee competition format used in this guide is derived from this successful and long running event. Looking forward, Forests Ontario is eager to expand Tree Bee and reach more schools and students across Ontario and Canada with your help.

Competitions are targeted to students in grades 4 through 6. As a Tree Bee coordinator you may choose if students or schools will be charged to participate in a competition. Before arriving at the event, students should be divided into teams of 2 to 3, however if required, students can compete individually. A Tree Bee competition includes 30 minutes of testing, 15 minutes each for tree identification and forest literacy, followed by "half-time" entertainment (i.e. a short film, interactive presentation) which runs while tests are marked by volunteers. The winning teams are those with the highest combined score on the tree identification and forest literacy tests. Teams ranked in the top 4 positions are awarded pennants and ties are allowed.

> Every year at my own school, students who are no longer eligible to participate because they are in grade 7, ask if they can help coach and they come back to help the team prepare for the next competition.
>
> Tree Bee Coach, St Monica Catholic School - 2013

Sample Agenda (for a competition outside school hours)

• Arrival & Registration – 30 minutes

• Opening Remarks & Test Distribution – 15 minutes

• Tree Identification Test – 15 minutes

• Forest Literacy Test – 15 minutes

• Half-Time Entertainment/Marking Tests – 40 minutes

• Winners Announced – 25 minutes

• Closing Remarks – 5 minutes

Total competition length – 2.5 hours

Please note that the above agenda is only a suggestion and can be modified to fit your needs (i.e. longer or shorter testing period, tests marked post event).

Sample Budget

Each Tree Bee Coordinator will need to establish a program budget. Use the following sample budget to guide your development bearing in mind several of the items listed below are optional and this budget does not account for staff time.

Type	Description	Cost
Logistics		
Venue Rental	Ex. schools, municipal buildings, outdoor education centres	$500
Speaker Costs	Optional cost associated with half-time entertainment	$250
Printing	Event agendas, participation certificates, photo release waivers, etc.	$250
Event Supplies		
Signage	Pop-up or hanging Tree Bee banner; Sponsor recognition	$250
Supplies	Ink, pencils, clipboards, paper, etc.	$200
Food & Beverage	Optional cookies, donuts, coffee, juice, etc.	$500
Student Recognition		
Prizes	Giveaways and prizes for students	$300
T-Shirts	Optional Tree Bee t-shirts for all participating students	$1,000
	TOTAL (not including staff time):	**$3,250**

Coordinator Role

Without volunteer coordinators, Tree Bee competitions wouldn't be possible. Local coordinators are responsible for on the ground logistics and promotion of their Tree Bee competitions. The following chart outlines major coordinator responsibilities.

Task	Notes
Select competition date	Consider if you want to run your Tree Bee competition during school hours. Events have also been held on weeknights and on Saturdays. If held outside of school hours, expect parents, siblings and/or guardians of participating students to attend.
Book venue	There are many venue options including school auditoriums, museums and city owned meeting rooms – get creative! Venue needs will vary depending on how you structure your competition but consider capacity, seating, the ability to project a slideshow and possibly a private space for volunteers to mark tests.
Secure funding as required	The cost to run a Tree Bee competition can be low or high depending on your budget. You can offset costs by requesting local businesses donate prizes, space or volunteers. Also consider approaching businesses and foundations for financial support to run your event.
Promote event to local educators	Be sure to reach out to educators in your community early to ensure a high turnout. Attending principal or staff meetings is an effective means to reach teachers.
Plan event agenda	Who will MC the event, hand out prizes or provide "half-time" entertainment? Decide how long you want your event to run, 2 to 3 hours should be enough, and draft an agenda.
Find & train volunteers	Volunteers are an excellent resource at a Tree Bee competition. Draw from existing organizational volunteers or recruit new ones to assist with event set-up, tear-down and test marking.
Manage registration	This is an ongoing task running from when you start promoting your event until your registration deadline. If you plan on handing out participation certificates require teachers to submit the names of students in advance.
Preparing & printing event materials	Materials can be printed as they are prepared and include event agendas, Tree Bee signage, forest literacy tests, tree identification answer form, photo waivers and participation certificates.
Staff event	Ensure there is an adequate number of staff and volunteers to run the event. You will need to have people on hand to set up the venue, check in students, hand out and collect tests, mark tests, take photos (optional) and hand out prizes (optional) and tear-down.

A Competition Checklist (Appendix A) is included in this document to facilitate the planning of your Tree Bee competition.

Forests Ontario's Role

Forests Ontario is proud to support community Tree Bee events through the development of Tree Bee resources and the maintenance of the Tree Bee webiste and support materials which include:

- Sample tree identification test (PowerPoint)

- Sample forest literacy test (PDF)

- Answer keys for any prepared tests

- Access to an online bank of multiple choice questions and a PowerPoint template to prepare your own test

- Modifiable email/letter/poster templates to promote local Tree Bee events to educators

- Online Tree Bee coordinator and teacher guides

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can I charge students or schools to participate in a competition?

There is no cost to access Tree Bee or Focus on Forests teaching resources for use by educators or community groups; however, fees associated with participation in regional events are at the discretion of local organizers.

2. What is the format of a Tree Bee competition?

Traditionally, Tree Bee competitions are comprised of two testing components: tree identification and forest literacy.

a) Tree identification

Teams are challenged to identify a number of trees using only images or samples of prominent features such as bark, buds, fruit, leaves or the tree silhouette. The number of trees on the test is chosen by the local organizers; however, students are commonly asked to identify 30 tree species and are given 30 seconds to review each image or sample.
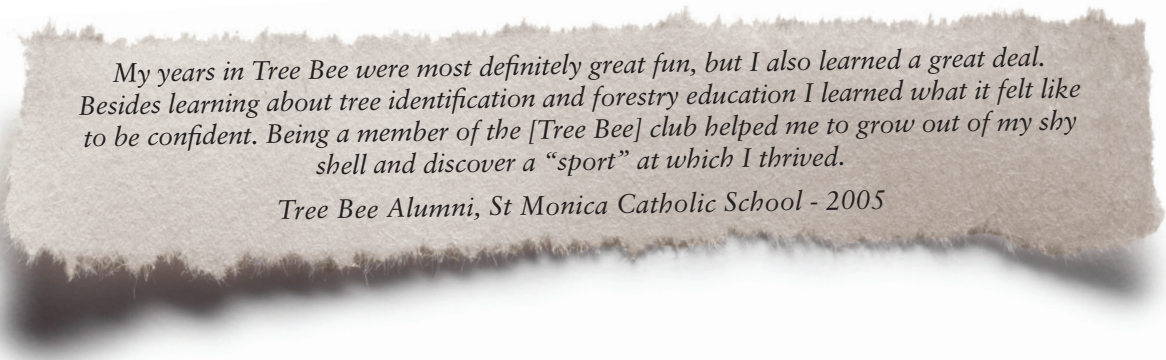
b) Forest Literacy Quiz

Following the tree ID quiz, students have a set amount of time to complete a multiple choice test focused on forest literacy. Again, the number of questions and time given to answer is at the discretion of the coordinator, however, traditionally students are given 15 minutes to answer 30 questions.

Marking and the announcement of the winning teams can take place the same night as testing or at a later date. Should you plan on marking tests the same night it is recommended that "half-time" entertainment be arranged.

3. What are students tested on at a Tree Bee competition?

Students will be tested on tree identification skills and forest literacy. Study materials, including a bank of possible multiple choice questions, are all accessible through the Focus on Forests website. The tree identification portion will focus on common native and introduced Canadian tree species. Currently the resource materials focus on tree species commonly found in Ontario, however you can test on additional species if you inform participating teams in advance.

My years in Tree Bee were most definitely great fun, but I also learned a great deal. Besides learning about tree identification and forestry education I learned what it felt like to be confident. Being a member of the [Tree Bee] club helped me to grow out of my shy shell and discover a "sport" at which I thrived.

Tree Bee Alumni, St Monica Catholic School - 2005

4. How is the winning team determined?

The individual winners are graded by team with one mark awarded per correct identification or multiple choice answer. Teams are then ranked according to overall score with the highest score receiving first place. It is at the discretion of the local organizers if they will allow ties.

Additional awards (i.e spirit or school award) can be handed out at the discretion of local organizers.

5. How much preparation is required to organize a competition?

The amount of time it takes to plan a Tree Bee competition will depend on the size and scope of the event. Major organizer responsibilities relate to contacting schools, taking registration, logistics and sponsorship/fundraising if required. Coordinators can access a tree identification and forest literacy test or create their own. In general, coordinators can anticipate a moderate time commitment. See Appendix A (Competition Checklist) for a more detailed breakdown of tasks.

6. How many participants are needed to host a successful event?

Your Tree Bee event can be as large or small as you want! Competitions can be held for a single classroom or club, between students in different classes at the same school or between multiple schools from the same area. The size and complexity of the event will depend on your capacity as a volunteer.

Bringing Forests into the Classroom

Forests Ontario is a registered, non-profit organization committed to the re-greening of Ontario through forest restoration efforts. Our education and awareness programs provide support to educators to bring forestry into their classrooms and to create stewards to protect our forests for the future. Our two leading education programs are Focus on Forests and the Ontario Envirothon.

Focus on Forests is Canada`s leading forest education program that engages youth and educators in learning more about our forests. We achieve this goal through the development free curriculum-linked resources and videos, the delivery of immersive programs and outreach activities. Printed resources are available in French and English for grades K-12. Visit www.focusonforests.ca to access our resources!

The Ontario Envirothon is a unique program for students in grades 9- 12 that encourages participants to learn about the natural world through direct experiences in the outdoors. Working in teams of 5, students participate in workshops and tests and are mentored by professionals from the natural resources sector. The objective of the Ontario Envirothon goes beyond learning about the environment, and shows students how to make positive changes and lead by example within their own communities. For more information visit www.ontarioenvirothon.on.ca.

Thank you to our Tree Bee Partners:

Forests Ontario would like to thank our Tree Bee partners whose generous support enabled us to develop the Tree Bee website and associated online resources:

Appendix A – Competition Check List

4 months (in advance of preferred competition date)

☐ *Establish a budget for your event.* How many students/parents do you expect to attract? What materials will you need to purchase? Will you be providing prizes, student recognition materials or t-shirts?

☐ *Determine logistics.* Will there be registration fees to participate? Will the event take place during or outside of school hours? Will schools have a limit on the number of students that can participate?

☐ *Select competition date and venue.* Ensure the venue has adequate space and capacity for your event. Schedule a walk through before selecting a final location.

☐ *Approach funders (as required).* Approach local businesses, foundations and granting organizations. This may not be necessary as you could be planning a small event or your organization may be covering the costs of this event.

3 months

☐ *Communicate your event to educators.* Reach out to teachers, Scout/Guides leaders, home school groups or other formal and informal educators in your community. Post event on your organizations website and/or event board and social media. Include a registration package and a link to the Teacher Guide.

☐ *Manage Registration (ongoing task).* Confirm registration with teachers. If required ensure photo waivers are signed.

☐ *Arrange for student recognition materials.* Order any student recognition items you want to distribute at your event (i.e. ribbons, pennants). Request donations or purchase prize items for winning teams if desired.

2 months

☐ *Set an event agenda.* A typical Tree Bee competition runs for 2.5 hours. Include time for opening remarks, testing, half-time entertainment if winners are announced that night as well as awards presentation. For a sample agenda refer to the Competition Format section of this guide.

☐ *Select event Master of Ceremonies.*

☐ *Confirm Half-Time entertainment.* Arrange for an individual or group to entertain students while tests are being marked. This should take no more than 40 minutes. Examples of half-time entertainment include watching a short film, speakers with animal ambassadors and knot tying.

☐ *Send registration reminder.* Remind educators to register for the event.

☐ *Manage Registration (ongoing task).* Confirm registration with teachers. If required ensure photo waivers are signed.

☐ *Prepare tree identification test.* Using the PowerPoint template provided on the Focus on Forests website and your own images create a tree identification test.

☐ *Prepare forest literacy test.* Select multiple choice questions from the question bank to generate your forest literacy test.

☐ *Recruit volunteers.* Anticipate the need for 5 volunteers to assist with check-in, test distribution, marking, photography and other general tasks. If you require volunteers to produce a Venerable Sector Check considering recruiting earlier.

☐ *Print materials.* You will need to print an answer sheet for the tree identification test (available on the Focus on Forests website) as well as copies of the forest literacy test. Ensure that answer keys are also available for the volunteer test markers.

☐ *Manage Registration (ongoing task).* Confirm registration with teachers. If required ensure photo waivers are signed.

☐ *Press Release.* If you are inviting media to your Tree Bee event put out a press release 2 to 3 weeks in advance of your event.