

Listening to a Tree

Trees are alive! A tree is active long before its leaves sprout in the spring. Sap is circulating in its vessels as the tree prepares to nourish the cells that will produce leaves, branches, and wood.

You didn't realize that a tree has fluid circulating in its vessels? Or that this fluid nourishes cells? Does that remind you of something? That's right! It's just like us humans!

You can hear how various parts of our bodies function with a stethoscope. Well, you can do the same thing (or just about) with a tree!

Early spring is the best time of the year to listen to a tree, when it's practically gurgling with sap. But not all trees are good subjects. Avoid softwoods and pick a hardwood tree. You'll want one at least 15 centimetres in diameter with smooth, thin bark. Birch, beech, and cherry trees are good choices. Place the stethoscope against the trunk of the tree and listen closely. You may need to move the stethoscope around a bit to find a good spot for listening.

Then listen up! You'll hear your tree gurgling, crackling, and bubbling!

