

Old Saybrook Parks and Recreation Trail System Scavenger Hunt

1. ___ Find at least one **oak leaf**. They look like this:

Oak trees can live as long as 1,000 years and can produce about 10 million acorns in its lifetime.



2. ___ Find a **mushroom** growing out of the bark of a standing or fallen tree. Mushrooms that grow on trees are usually polyporus mushrooms which means that their underside has a bunch of tiny holes in it instead of gills like most mushrooms do. Polyporus mushrooms can be found almost year round. Their main growing season is in the spring and summer but the mushrooms will remain attached to their host all year. Even through winter! [Learn more about polypore mushrooms here.](#)
3. ___ Flip over some logs and rocks and look for **isopods**. Isopods are little critters that you may know as roly pollies. Isopods are really unique because they aren't actually insects, they are crustaceans. This means that they are related to crabs and lobsters, but what makes them different is that they have evolved to live on land instead of under water. [Learn more about isopods here.](#)
4. ___ A really cool plant that you can find are **ferns**. [Ferns look something like this:](#) These plants are really interesting because they have been around since the dinosaurs. In fact, many dinosaurs' diets consisted primarily of ferns.
5. ___ A really special species of tree that grows in the preserve is the **Mountain Laurel**. The Mountain Laurel grows pretty white and pink flowers that are actually [Connecticut's state flower](#). One thing to be careful about the Mountain Laurel is that burning its wood can produce toxic smoke that is dangerous to inhale, so it is important to know what Mountain Laurel looks like so you can avoid throwing it in your campfire. Learn more about Connecticut's state flower here:
<https://dendro.cnre.vt.edu/dendrology/syllabus/factsheet.cfm?ID=52>
6. ___ Find some **mica**! Mica is a shiny black rock that can be found in big boulders and other large rocks. If you walk past a rock and you see something sparkle, you have just found mica!

Scavenger hunt was created by Zane Bauer, Class of 2021, for his senior year project. – Thank you Zane!