

## Project Proposal: Tree Finder

Your names here.

### **Our Mission Statement:**

Tree Finder is a free web application dedicated to providing an ever expanding database of current, accurate information on trees in the Finger Lakes area in a user-friendly, dynamic format. We believe in nature education for the sake of both our community and our environment.

### **Audience:**

Tree Finder is designed for anyone and everyone! Our site is multifunctional and will serve everyone from those who have no knowledge of trees, looking to identify something in their yard, to experienced naturalists who can store their favorites. Our range of user options allows for different kinds of interactions

### **Summary Statement:**

Tree Finder's website relies on a database maintained by the team. Each tree in our database will have an information page which will be read by users. Users can access this database in 3 ways:

1. Search by tree name:  
In this mode, users will enter a tree name which will be checked against the database. The user will then be given a list of results, and can choose a tree from these to view information. This feature is the most similar to the majority of websites (and, frankly, obsolete in the age of google.) We expect users to utilize this to check their identification against ours, or to search for a tree to add to favorites (see below.)
2. Search by leaf (guided process):  
Using this method, users will answer simple questions about a tree they have found (relating to things such as leaf shape, bark, bud pattern, etc.). Each question will be accompanied by pictures and information explaining terms or possible variations. Our program will then narrow down the user's tree in order to direct them to the proper page.  
This is the function which differs most from the majority of informational sites out there, and from traditional guidebooks. It is important to us that this feature is intelligible for beginners, but still accessible for a more seasoned audience.
3. User account:  
Our website allows for the creation of user accounts. With an account, the user has the option to favorite certain trees to allow for easy return to that tree's information page. A user account also allows for the user to add to the database. The user can submit new information on a tree already in the database, or submit a new tree they have found in the finger lakes area. These will be monitored by the team.

Above all, our project is committed to education of our community. We believe that knowing your local environment and ecosystems is a valuable skill that should not be intimidating nor unfamiliar to

anyone. Our work draws heavily from the research of naturalists, to whom we are indebted for our source material. In particular we owe our inspiration to a dichotomous guide by May Thielgaard Watts.

Features	Our Site	oplin.org	arborday.org	leaf-id.com
Organized method of identification	yes	yes	yes	yes
Uses laymans terms	yes	no	yes	yes
Modern user friendly design	yes	no	yes	no
Images of leaves, bark and tree itself	yes	yes	no	yes
Wide target audience	yes	no	yes	yes
Identify trees by name	yes	yes	no	yes
User accounts and settings	yes	no	no	no
Data entry	yes	no	no	no

### Comparative Analysis:

We compared all of the planned features of our website with the features of similar websites. oplin.org, arborday.org and leaf-id.org are all websites with a similar idea but each lack in certain areas. For example oplin.org offers an organized method of identification, good images, and allows identification by name, but lacks in places like design, target audience and using simple terms. arborday.org has good organization, design and did target audience, but does not have proper images, the ability to identify trees by name and doesn't allow the users to enter new data. Finally there is leaf-id.com which has good organization, terminology, and allows identify by name, but lacks in design, user accounts, and user data entry. With our website we hope to include all of the good aspects of these websites, in addition to good, user-friendly design, a wide assortment of images to help identify, user accounts to save trees that they've identified, and the ability to enter in new tree data into the system.

- <https://www.arborday.org/trees/whattree/>
- <http://www.oplin.org/tree/index.html>
- <http://www.tree-guide.com/>

### Personas and Use Cases:

- Amy:
  - Amy is a fourth-grade teacher
  - She creates a science activity where her students have a leaf scavenger hunt.
  - She will give her students a list that has a picture and a description of the leaf and it's the student's job to try to find the leaf
  - She googles, "identifying leaves to their original tree, Ithaca"

- She sees a link that says, “List of the different trees around the Finger Lake Region” which is the Tree Finder website
- On the home page she sees that she could navigate to the different places in the Finger Lakes region to see which trees are in an area.
- She clicks on the area around Ithaca and she chooses the trees and leaves to include in her activity
  - In this situation, Amy wants to create a science activity that involves knowing the different trees and their leaves in Ithaca. Tree Finder has descriptions of the leaves from trees in Ithaca, which makes it easier for Amy to put together the activity for her students.
- John:
  - John is a freshman, environmental studies student at Ithaca College  
He has an assignment where he has to create a book that has the different leaves from Ithaca’s trees
  - He needs resources to help him identify which leaf belongs to which tree
  - He googles, “Trees in Ithaca and their leaves”
  - He finds the Tree Finder website and that it has information about the trees in the Finger Lakes region
  - He clicks the link and the home page shows the trees from the different areas in the Finger Lakes Region
  - He clicks on the region near Lake Cayuga and he sees that he can see a list of the leaves that are in Tompkins County
    - In John’s situation, he needs a resource that could help him identify the leaves in Ithaca for his assignment. If John were to find a leaf, he can go on the Tree Finder website and see that he can identify his leaf with the step-by-step if/else program that is provided on the site

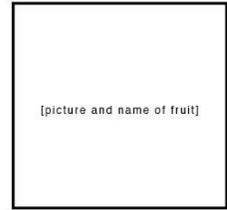
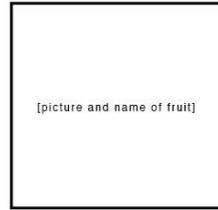
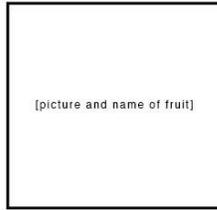
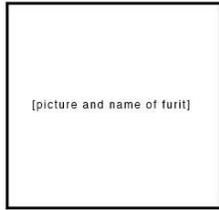
## Two Views

\*Note: Since handing in this assignment, our project has since evolved due to new ideas and feedback from user testing. The “database” feature is in our most recent designs found on the Project Part 3 report.

View 1: Amy asks all of her students to bring in a leaf that they find on the ground. The assignment is to try and identify which tree the leaf belongs to. Using the “search by leaf”, the students are able to go through and identify the tree it belongs by best describing their leaf based on the prompts. The view they would see is not targeting towards kids, but it’s simple and easy to use design makes it accessible for all users with different experience.

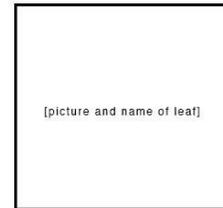
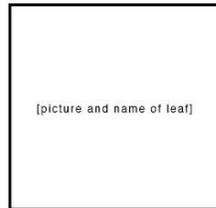
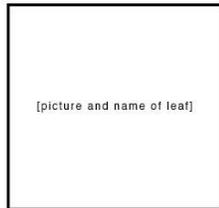
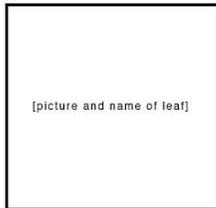
View 2: John is looking to find a place that can help him find more information about trees in general in the Tompkins County area for his assignment. Because John isn’t searching for one specific tree, he uses the database (listed in the NAV bar where “search” currently is below). Here, John can get an A-Z list of all of the tree in Tompkins County.

## Identify by fruit:



< GO BACK

## Identify by leaf:

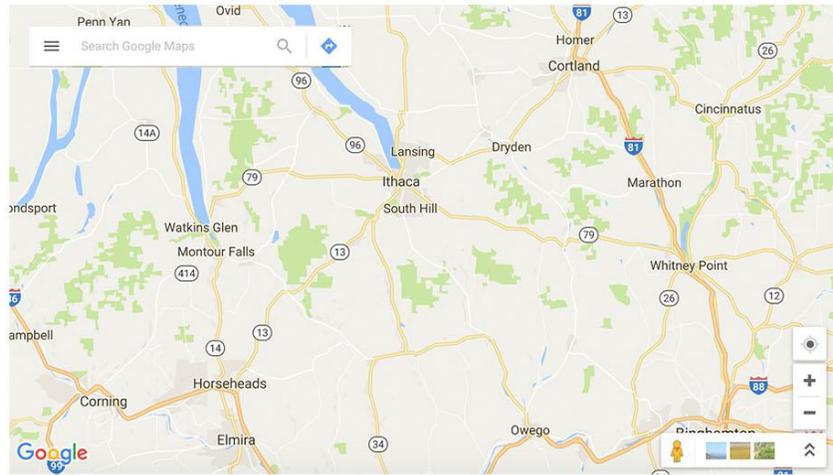


< GO BACK

THE LOGO

HOME | SEARCH | MAP | ABOUT US | LOGIN

## MAP



# THE LOGO

HOME | SEARCH | MAP | ABOUT US | LOGIN

Submit a new Tree:

# THE LOGO

HOME | SEARCH | MAP | ABOUT US | LOGIN

## Login

Don't have an account? Sign up [here](#).

What we learned:

- Homepage: Clearer search, "OR", additional search button
- Nav: Tree List instead of search which lists all the trees
- Include search on each page, search the tree database
- No user accounts
- Save favorites via cookies
- Submission: Have to give an email

- Map: Get rid of map
- Add a your favorites page - make sure your cookies are turned on (information about cookies and why)
- **Three List of Features:**
  1. **Prototype Features:** Searchable database, all basic functionality of site,
  2. **MVP Features:** search by leaf, submissions, favorites
  3. **Future Features:** more favorites, user accounts, profiles, expanding database area , map, user pictures

### **Development Plan:**

Week 1: Nov 13 - 18

Improved Wireframes: Melody

UI Mockup: Josh

Navigation Chart: Eli

Features & Timeline: Anna

Week 2: Nov 19 - 25

Basic HTML for site pages

Database structure & object attributes

Begin collecting search images & tree images

Week 3: Nov 26 - Dec 2

Begin implementing 'search by' features

Cookies & Favorites

Week 4: Dec 3 - 9

CSS & design

Continue coding search features

submissions

Week 5: Dec 10 - 14

Final tweaks

FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATION DECEMBER 14