

TURNOUT

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HAVING TROUBLE IDENTIFYING PLANTS & TREES?

At a recent shopping visit to Bunnings I produced a leaf from a rogue tree starting to grow in our back yard. The assistant grabbed her phone and took a picture of the leaf and presto... the answer.

She used an app called LeafSnap.

On returning home I quickly loaded that app onto my phone. The concept is you take a picture of the leaf, flower, or bark and the app produces a number of similar leaves, flowers etc. Only you have to decide which one it is.

I tried out the app on a few known plants and trees in our back yard with varying results.

This then resulted in conducting some further research onto the app—ask Google.

The app is a result of a [collaboration](#) between Columbia University, the University of Maryland and the Smithsonian Institution. The computer scientists made use of mathematical techniques developed for face recognition and they applied these to species identification. The botanists at the Smithsonian collected the initial data sets of leaf species and the photography. Every leaf photograph that is uploaded is matched against a leaf-image library so that the best matches are ranked and noted for verification. It is complicated because "[within a single species](#), leaves can have quite diverse shapes, while leaves from different species are sometimes quite similar, so one of the main technical challenges in using leaves to identify plant species has been to find effective representations of their shape, which capture their most important characteristics."It's not perfect...yet. The leaf identification process needs work. You have to take a picture of the leaf against a white background, which is a bit awkward when you are marching around. It is only good for the USA, although the Canadian Hemlock is noted. That tree could come in handy right now for some Canadians. And for this TreeHugger, the snapshot part wouldn't work at all. However, there is a nice visual dictionary of leaf types which can be matched to names and descriptions if one has the patience to scroll through it. There are photos and information about the tree's flowers, fruit, seeds and bark--giving the user a very full understanding of the species.

Reference www.treehugger.com/natural-sciences/leafsnap-is-a-new-app-to-identify-trees.html

Further research identified an app for Australian trees called PlantNet **Plant Identification**.

Pl@ntNet is an application that allows you to identify plants simply by photographing them with your smartphone. Very useful when you don't have a botanist on hand! Pl@ntNet is also a great citizen science project: all the plants

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your photographs are collected and analysed by scientists around the world to better understand the evolution of plant biodiversity and to better preserve it.

Pl@ntNet allows you to identify and better understand all kinds of plants living in nature: flowering plants, trees, grasses, conifers, ferns, vines, wild salads or cacti. Pl@ntNet can also identify a large number of cultivated plants (in parks and gardens) but this is not its primary purpose. We especially need Pl@ntNet's users to inventory the wild plants, those that you can observe in nature of course but also those that grow on the sidewalks of our cities or in the middle of your vegetable garden!

The more visual information you give to Pl@ntNet about the plant you are observing, the more accurate the identification will be. There are indeed many plants that look alike from afar and it is sometimes small details that distinguish two species of the same genus. Flowers, fruits and leaves are the most characteristic organs of a species and it is them that should be photographed first. But any other detail can be useful, such as thorns, buds or hair on the stem. A photograph of the whole plant (or the tree if it is one!) is also very useful information, but it is often not sufficient to allow a reliable identification.

At present Pl@ntNet makes it possible to recognize about 20,000 species. We are still a long way from the 360,000 species living on earth, but Pl@ntNet is getting richer every day thanks to the contributions of the most experienced users among you. Don't be afraid to contribute yourself! Your observation will be reviewed by the community and may one day join the photo gallery illustrating the species in the application.

The new version of Pl@ntNet released in January 2019 includes many improvements and new features:

- The ability to filter recognized species by genus or family.*
- The differentiated data revision that gives more weight to users who have demonstrated the most skills (in particular the number of species observed, validated by the community).*
- The re-identification of shared observations, whether yours or those of other users of the application.*
- The multi-flora identification that allows you to search for the photographed plant in all the flora of the application and not only in the one you have selected. Very useful when you are not sure what flora to look for.*
- The selection of your favorite floras to access them more quickly.*
- The navigation at different taxonomic levels in image galleries.*
- The mapping of your observations.*
- Links to many factsheets.*

The web version of the application is also available at the following address: <https://identify.plantnet.org/>

Reference play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.plantnet&hl=en_AU

End result, if like me you are sometimes stumped when asked about a certain name of a tree, pull out your phone and take a picture.

If you are still confused don't despair, pick a leaf and a flower, a picture of the tree showing the bark and see one of our resident experts, namely Ron Allen and Roger Humphries.

George Pastuch

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is an articles in the February 2005 edition and Oct 2003 respectively of the Woodgroup SA newsletter. Both are monthly reports by Northern Turners on their previous month's activities.

NORTHERN TURNERS

Fourth Sat monthly 10 am – 3 pm at Golden Grove High School

35 members with guest Garry Stork from Abrasive Products attended the January meeting and. Garry initially talked about the history of the company, and then introduced a range of products, explained their uses and advantages.

The theme for this month's demonstrations was spheres. Ron Allen took members through turning different size spheres using different size tube tools. Looked easy but as several members tried their hand, found that it took practice and patience. Will be interesting to see how members use their imagination to use spheres in next month's competition (March).

Show & Tell: **Hans Noom** produced a bowl from a gate post given to him. **Leo Gaskin** brought a couple of potpourri bowls made from Camphor Laurel. **Ken Allen** brought a sand paper holder. Great idea! **Paul Beebee** brought a large vase from a piece of flowering red gum. The borer holes were painted black to emphasise them. **Leith Davidson** brought an earring holder looking a lot like a mushroom. He also brought a lidded bowl in sheoak. He explained how this piece started out as one thing and evolved into a different item. **Jim Hodson, Peter Page and John Girdler** brought their completed matched candle stick holders made from a work shop coordinated by Ann Kerr. All the feedback praised the excellent work done by Ann. **Well done.**

The rest of the day was spent networking – another way of saying we stood around talking. The March meeting will be on the 19th due to the Easter week end. Tim Skilton will talk on 'From Logs to Turning Blanks'. This meeting has been designated a general working day (Buddy Day). The emphasis will be on both, the less experienced members bringing their tools and having a go, and more experienced members spending time helping and supporting. Don't forget to have a go and enter the sphere competition.

NORTHERN TURNER'S ... September meeting was attended by 44 members included five visitors. New members **Jim Hodson** and **Perce Voigt** were welcomed. **Roger Humphris** demonstrated the use of jam chucks made from MDF and chip board. An alternate method was also demonstrated using a home made face plate. In his own amicable style, we were also shown the different uses of a bowel gauge. Masking tape also received a mention for its varied uses as an aid to jam chucking. Apart from being most entertaining, numerous handy hints were gleaned by many.

Ron Allen demonstrated the use of hot melt glue for another method of holding a blank for rechecking blanks or rough turned bowls. Ron attempting to hammer off the glued base from the blank completed the demo resulting in the timber base splintered before the glue let go.

Show'n'Tell: **Anne Kerr** showed off her standard lamp she designed and made from Blackwood finished in Danish Oil. There was unanimous agreement that the design and finished article was of an excellent standard. **Tim Skilton** showed several pieces made of Gidgee using gold paint to highlight different aspects of the various items. **George Pastuch** brought a small pot made from Radiata Pine and coloured using green food colouring. In addition a glass jar full of vinegar and nails as preparation to use the solution to ebonise. I was told not to shake up the solution but to let it sit and clear. Roger Humphris showed off some very thin turned flowers. He also highlighted his resourcefulness by purchasing two Monkey Pod bowls for under a dollar and returned one. Very nice too. **Ron Allen** brought along two pieces of Yew from the UK.

Ken McCall a visitor from Queensland, talked about the Queensland Guild, and about his very expensive exclusive pens, and about purchasing from the USA.

Competition Winners. A lidded bowl with finial.

A grade – Ron Adams B grade – Gerry Page C grade - John Girdler



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