Find A Tree!

Objective	This activity is designed to set the stage for learning about plant ID by asking participants to use their senses, other than sight, to get familiar with the nuances of a tree or plant.
Audience	2 or more participants; ages 8+
Duration	10-20 minutes
Materials	Bandanas
Background	When participants are first introduced to plant identification, they often think that all plants look the same. This activity was designed to shake that misconception by having participants get up close and personal with a single tree or plant. By using the senses to examine an individual tree or plant, they will begin to understand that there are lots of differences between both individual plants and plants of different species. After completing this activity, participants will be ready to learn about the different plant ID characteristics and apply those characteristics to identifying invasive plants.

Procedure	1. Have participants pick a partner.
	2. Explain that they'll be participating in an activity to help them prepare for learning to identify invasive plants by using all their senses, except sight, to identify a tree or plant.
	3. Explain the activity to the participants:
	  • They will be blindfolding their partner, using a bandana, then gently spinning their partner around a few times to disorient them.
	  • Next, they will carefully lead their blindfolded partner to a tree or plant. The blindfolded person should use their senses, except sight, to get to know the tree.
	  • When they are ready, lead them back to the starting point, spin them around again and untie the blindfold. Have them then try to find their tree or plant.
	  • Switch roles.
	4. Before starting this activity, set boundaries and remind participants to be safe and careful when spinning and guiding their blindfolded partners.
	5. Once everyone has had a chance to participate in both roles, come back together as a group and ask participants what characteristics were helpful in identifying their tree or plant? Ask participants to think about how this activity might help them to identify invasive plants? What characteristics might be helpful in identifying invasive plants?
	
	This activity is a great transition into invasive plant identification.