



ONE, TWO, THREE, TU B'SHEVAT

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As the little girl in this book discovers, celebrating the birthday of the trees is as easy as one, two, three!

JEWISH CONCEPTS

Trees hold a special place in Jewish thought and practice. The Torah (the first five books of the Bible) is often referred to as a Tree of Life, and Jewish law mandates special protections for trees. Perhaps it is fitting, then, that Jews celebrate Tu B'Shevat, also known as the birthday of the trees or the new year of the trees. The name of the holiday is also the date – the 15th (*tu* stands for 15 in Hebrew) of the Jewish month *Shevat*, which falls around late January to early February. In ancient times, farmers waited until trees were three years old before picking their fruit; the festival of Tu B'Shevat helped them keep track. Today the holiday is a time to appreciate the many good things trees offer and to acknowledge our role in protecting the environment. To learn more, visit pjlibrary.org/onetwothreetubshevat.

The family in this book celebrates Tu B'Shevat by planning a *seder*, or ritual meal, that showcases foods we get from trees. They also plant a tree, which is a classic Tu B'Shevat activity in Israel. If it's too cold to plant outdoors where you live, another meaningful way to mark the holiday is to plant something small indoors. Many families plant parsley on Tu B'Shevat and harvest it in time for their Passover *seder*, which arrives about two months later. No matter how you celebrate, remember to hug a tree!