

Enumerating Rationals Without Repetition

James Caldwell

John Cowles

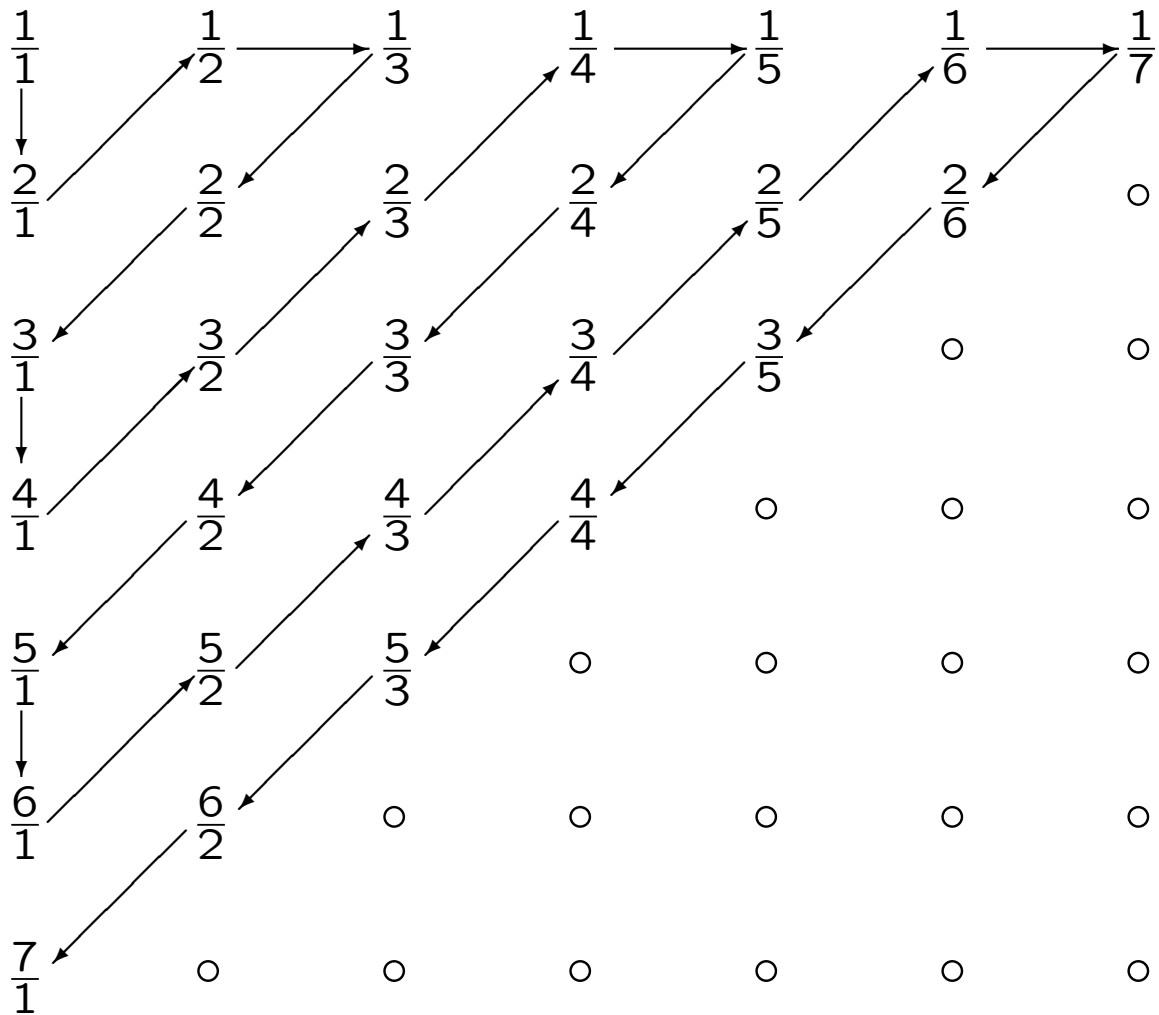
Ruben Gamboa

University of Wyoming

{jls,cowles,ruben}@cs.uwyo.edu

- \mathbb{P} is the **positive integers**.
- \mathbb{N} is the **nonnegative integers**.
- \mathbb{Q}^+ is the **positive rationals**.
- S is an infinite set.
- An **enumeration** of S is a function F from \mathbb{P} (or \mathbb{N}) **onto** S .
- An **enumeration without repetition** of S is an enumeration of S that is also **one to one**.

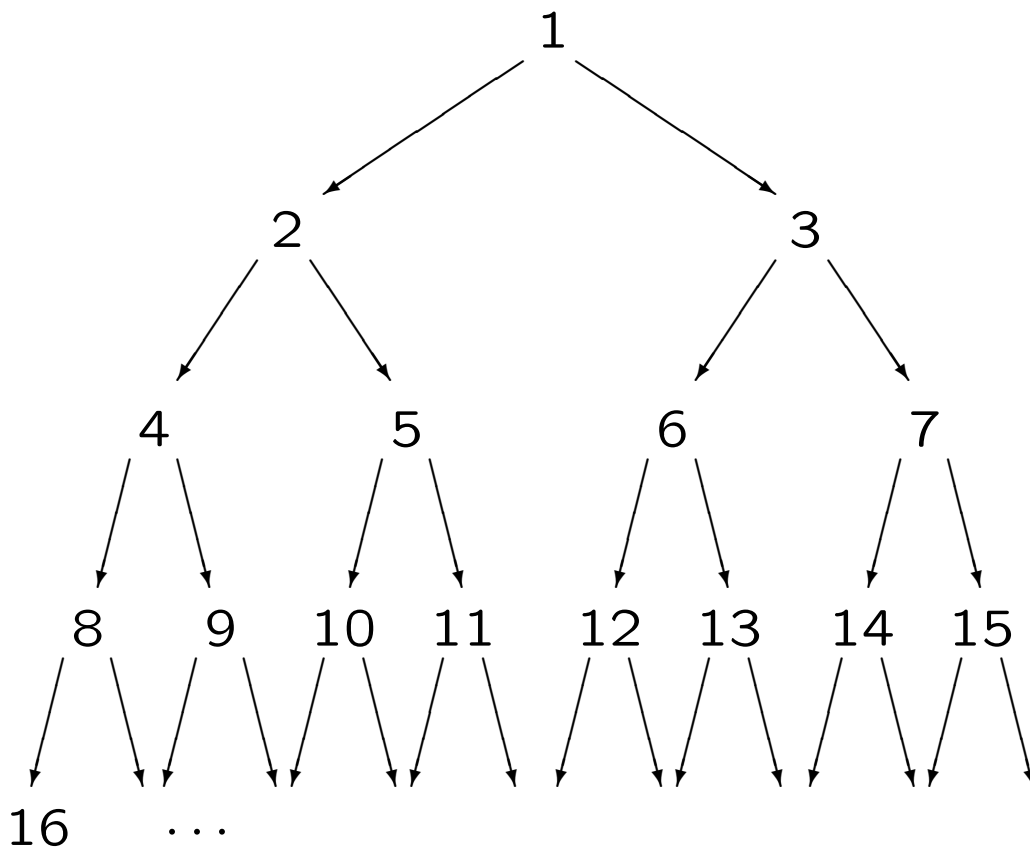
An **enumeration** of the positive rationals (with repetition)



$\frac{1}{1}, \frac{2}{1}, \frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{3}, \frac{2}{2}, \frac{3}{2}, \frac{1}{1}, \frac{1}{2}, \frac{3}{3}, \frac{2}{3}, \frac{1}{4}, \frac{1}{5}, \frac{2}{4}, \frac{3}{4}, \frac{1}{3}, \frac{2}{2}, \frac{1}{1}$

$\frac{6}{1}, \frac{5}{2}, \frac{4}{3}, \frac{3}{4}, \frac{2}{5}, \frac{1}{6}, \frac{1}{7}, \frac{2}{6}, \frac{3}{5}, \frac{4}{4}, \frac{5}{3}, \frac{6}{2}, \frac{7}{1}, \dots$

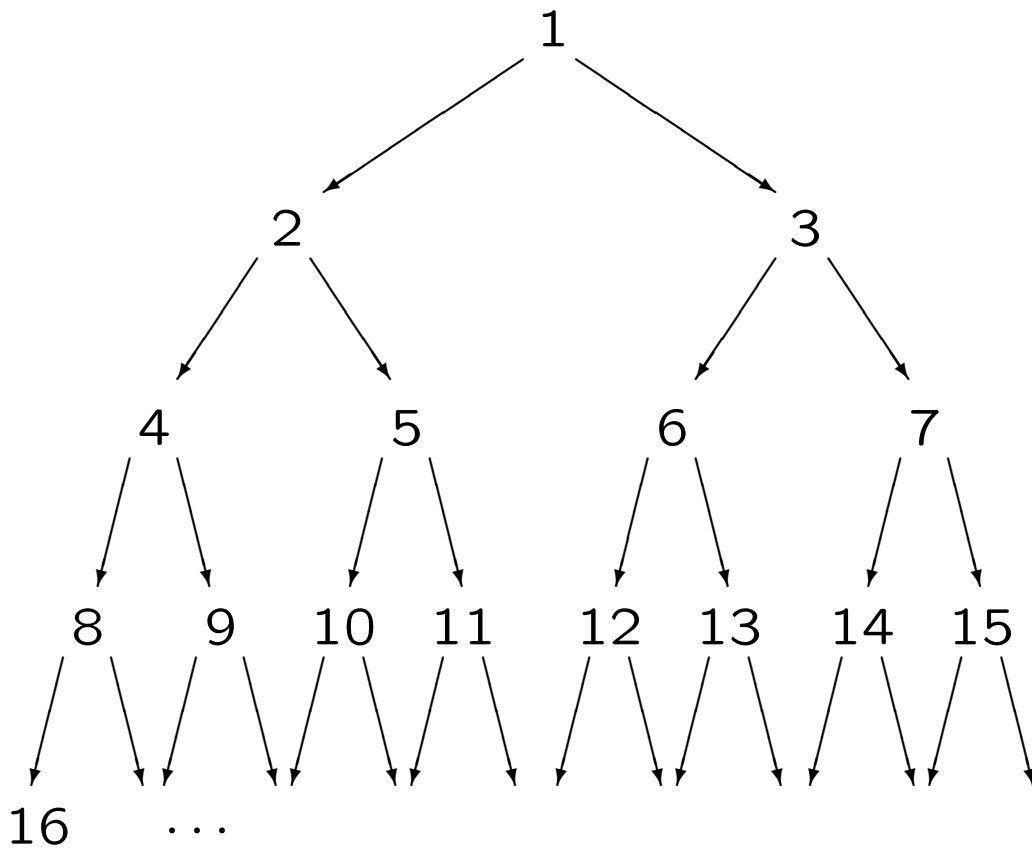
An **enumeration** of the nodes
of an infinite binary tree
(without repetition)



root: 1

left children: Even integers > 0

right children: Odd integers > 1



Parent to left child: $n \mapsto 2 \cdot n$

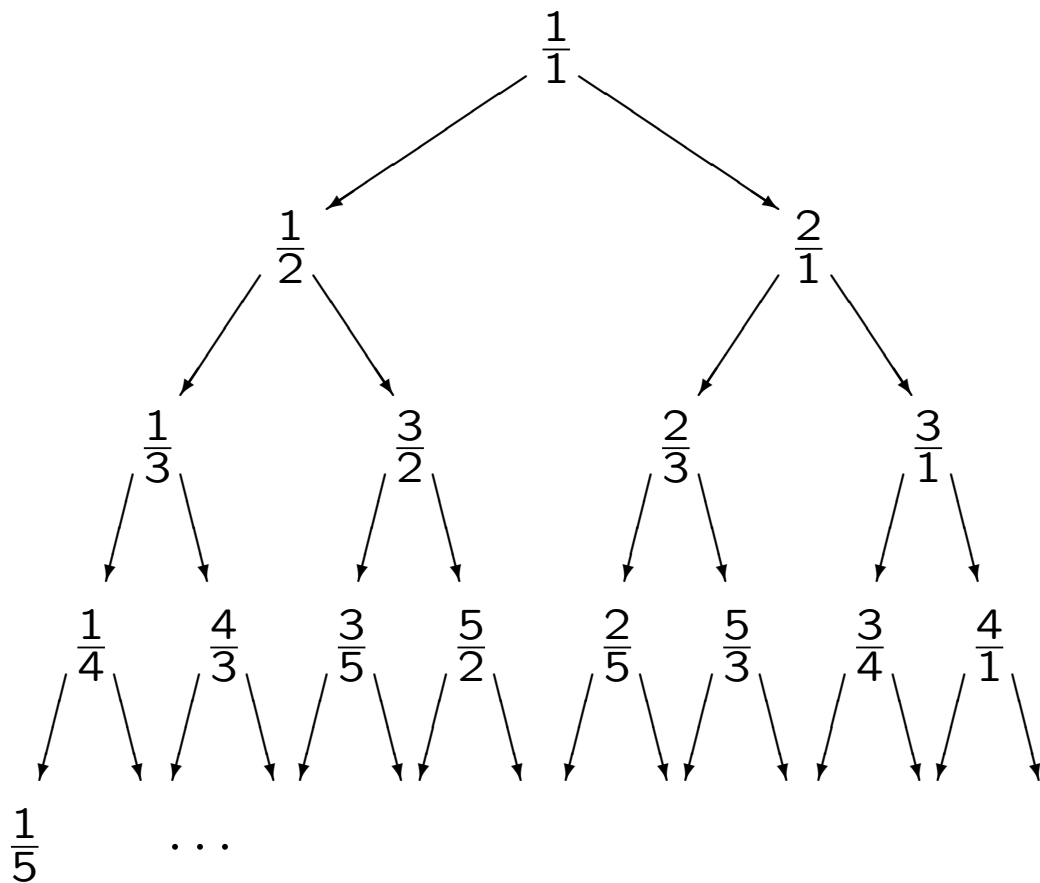
Parent to right child: $n \mapsto 2 \cdot n + 1$

Left child to parent: $n \mapsto \frac{n}{2}$

Right child to parent: $n \mapsto \frac{n-1}{2}$

Parent < Child

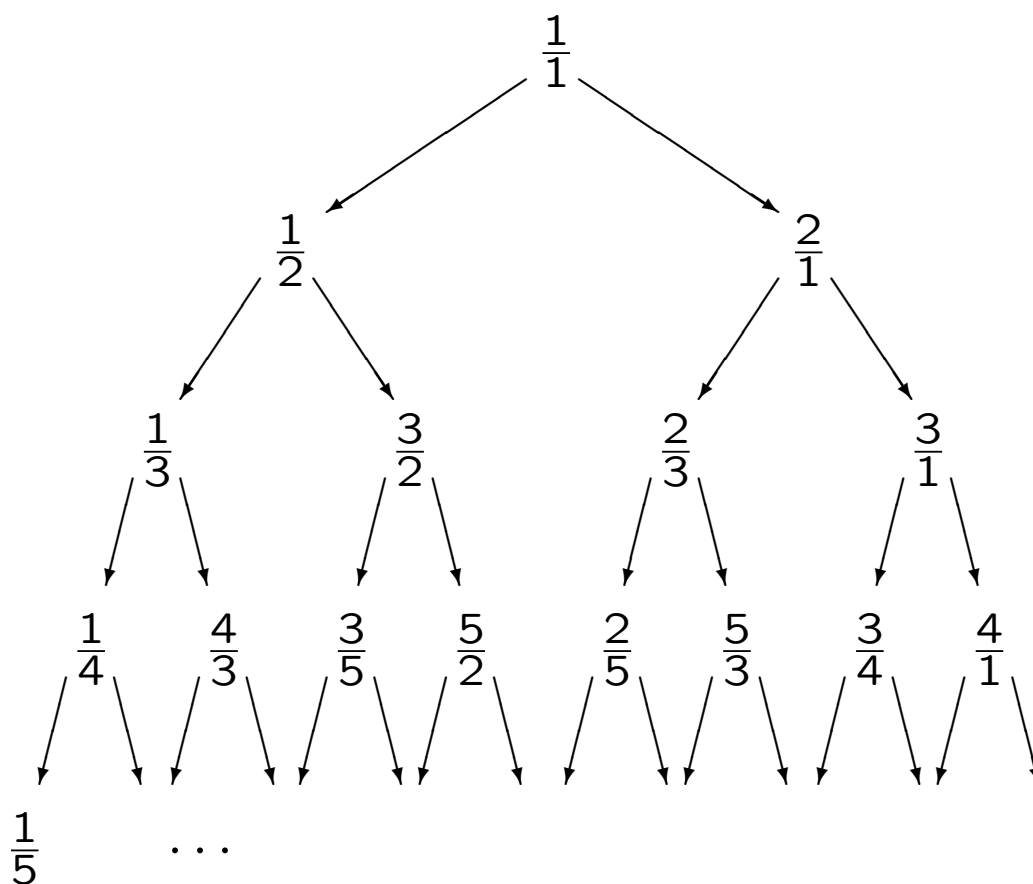
The **Calkin-Wilf** infinite binary tree



root: $\frac{1}{1}$

left children: Positive rationals < 1

right children: Rationals > 1



Parent to left child: $\frac{r}{s} \mapsto \frac{r}{r+s}$

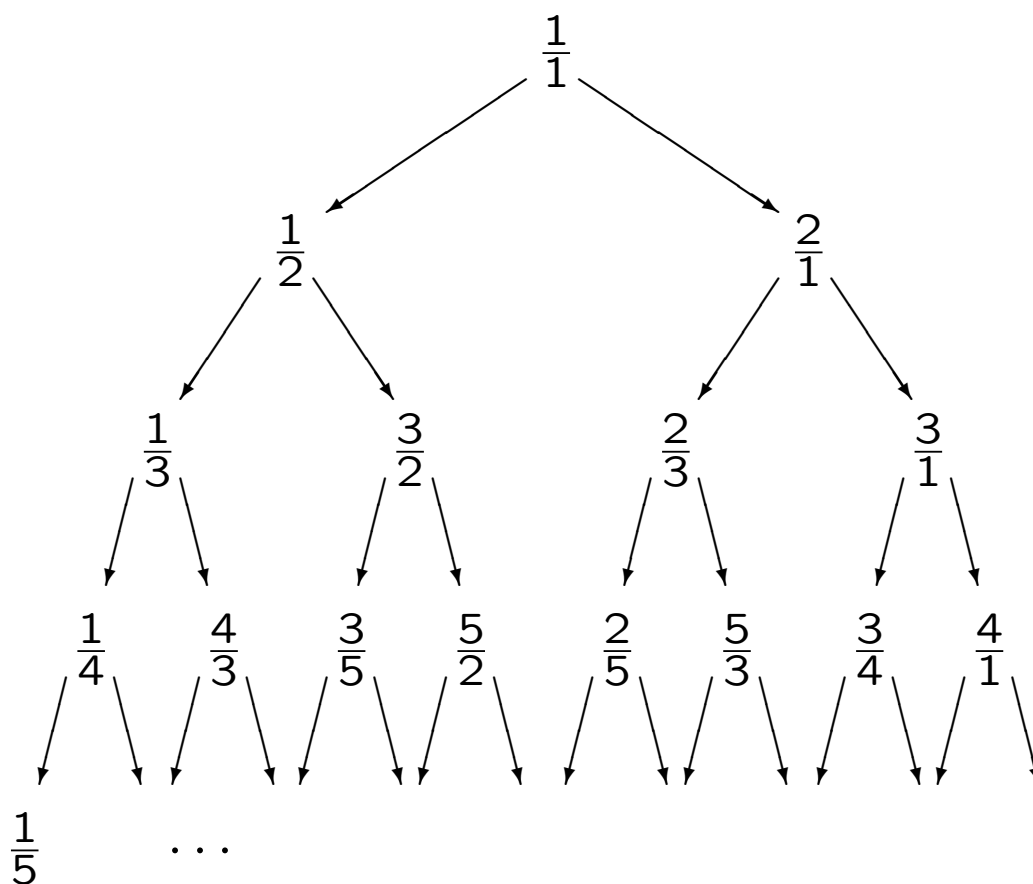
Parent to right child: $\frac{r}{s} \mapsto \frac{r+s}{s}$

Left child to parent: $\frac{r}{s} \mapsto \frac{r}{s-r}$

Right child to parent: $\frac{r}{s} \mapsto \frac{r-s}{s}$

Measure of node: $m\left(\frac{r}{s}\right) = r + s$

$$m(\text{Parent}) < m(\text{Child})$$



Parent to left child: $\frac{r}{s} \mapsto \frac{r}{r+s}$

Parent to right child: $\frac{r}{s} \mapsto \frac{r+s}{s}$

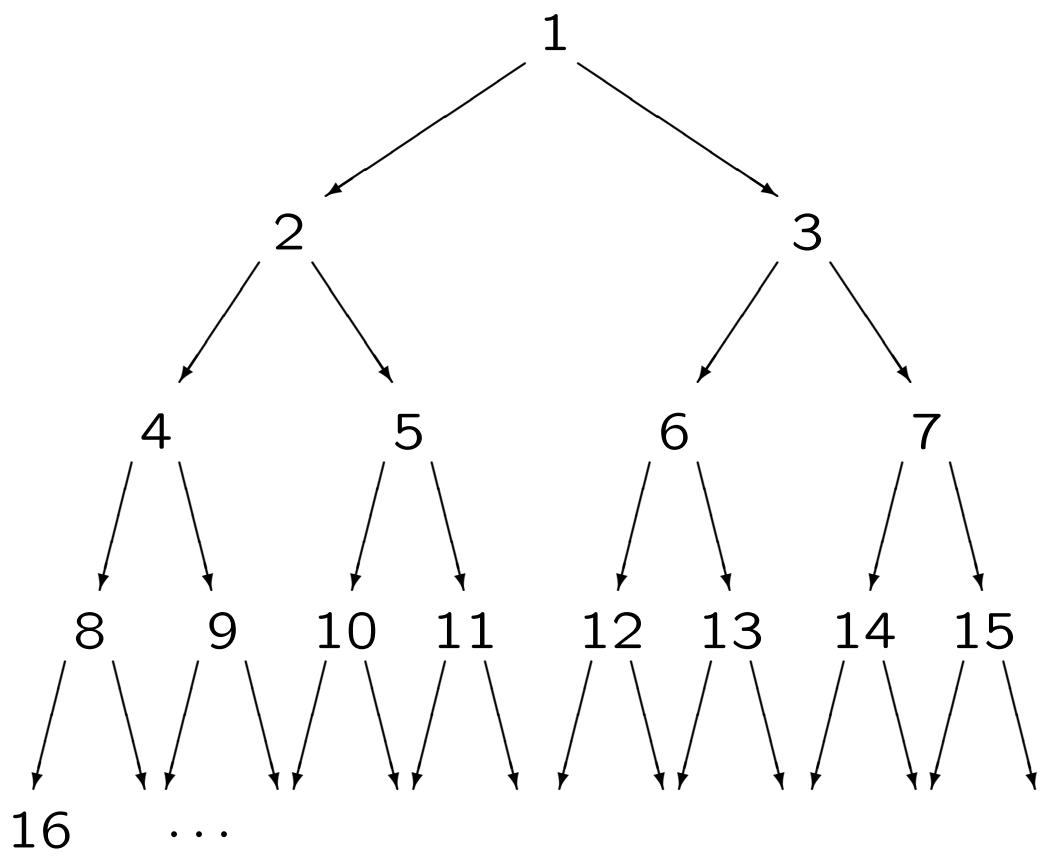
Each rational in tree is represented by a reduced fraction:

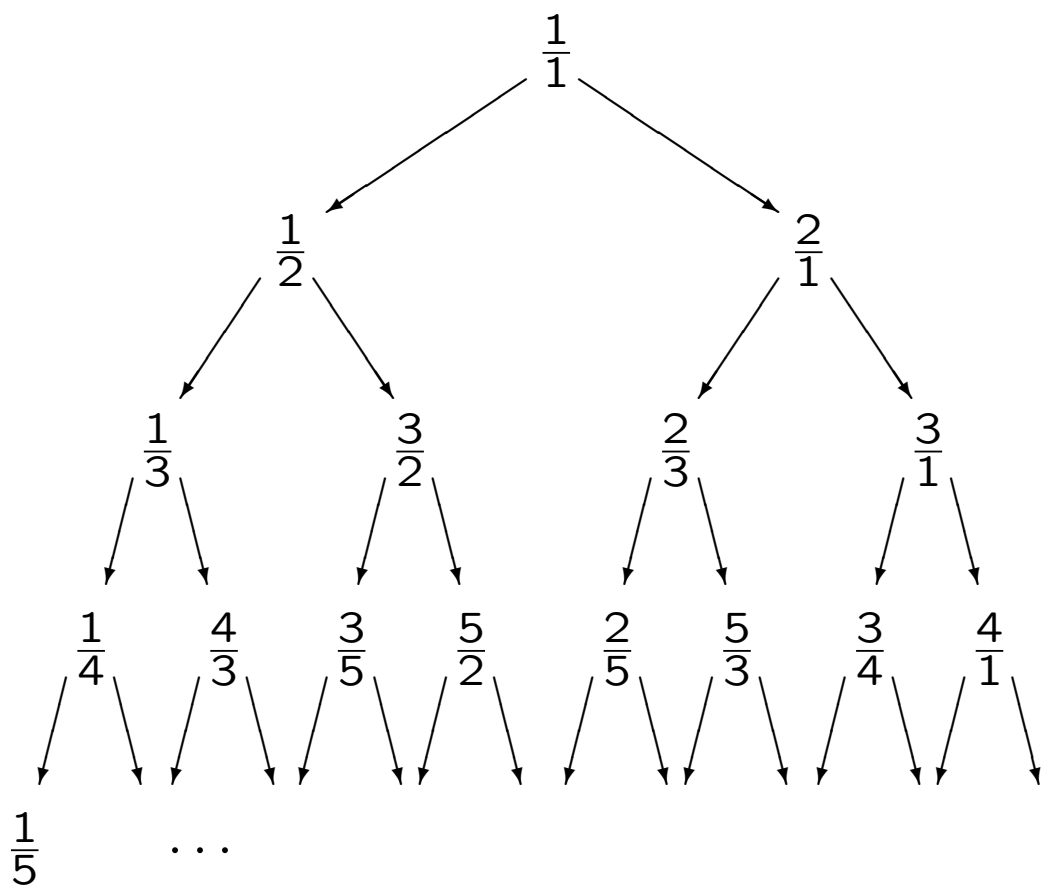
- $\gcd(1, 1) = 1$
- $\gcd(r + s, s) = \gcd(r, s) = \gcd(r, r + s)$

Identify the nodes in the two trees:

- Map root to root.
- If node is a left child then
 - Compute parent, P , in same tree
 - Recursively find node, P' , in other tree, corresponding to P .
 - Return left child of P' .
- If node is a right child then
 - Compute parent, P , in same tree
 - Recursively find node, P' , in other tree, corresponding to P .
 - Return right child of P' .

Obtain two functions: $f : \mathbb{P} \mapsto \mathbb{Q}^+$,
 $g : \mathbb{Q}^+ \mapsto \mathbb{P}$





The two functions: $f : \mathbb{P} \mapsto \mathbb{Q}^+$,
 $g : \mathbb{Q}^+ \mapsto \mathbb{P}$,
 are functional inverses.

This means $f : \mathbb{P} \mapsto \mathbb{Q}^+$ is both **onto** and **one to one**.

So $f : \mathbb{P} \mapsto \mathbb{Q}^+$ is an enumeration **without repetition**:

$$\frac{1}{1}, \frac{1}{2}, \frac{2}{1}, \frac{1}{3}, \frac{3}{2}, \frac{2}{3}, \frac{1}{4}, \frac{4}{3}, \frac{3}{5}, \frac{5}{2}, \frac{2}{5}, \frac{3}{4}, \frac{4}{1}, \frac{1}{5}, \dots$$

N. Calkin and H. Wilf, **Recounting the rationals**, Amer. Math. Monthly 107 (2000), 360–363.