

1. AMERICAN SYCAMORE

"At the end of Harris Place there stands a Sycamore which is like a beacon by itself, reflecting the late afternoon sun off its light gray/white trunk and limbs. In the moonlight, it seems to glow. Always late to leaf out, it sheds its bark during August, a sign, I'm guessing, that it is still alive and well. Although situated at the edge of a packed parking area and a steep bank, it does not really have anything like the proper feeding area its size requires." Chuck Hornsby 2007

"I work as a therapist and on a very busy day I would go outside my office on Harris Place, and look at the tree and let its beauty wash and renew me." Stephen Spitzer.

The American Sycamore is also known as the American Plane, Occidental Plane or Buttonwood, and is native to North America. It is easily recognized by its mottled, shedding bark. The bark of all trees has to yield to a growing trunk; in this case the process is not hidden because the bark is incapable of stretching.

The terms under which the New York Stock Exchange was formed in 1792 is called the Buttonwood Agreement because it was signed under a Buttonwood (Sycamore) tree.



2. WHITE OAK

"I can remember when I was a kid it was struck by lightning two times. When my mother died, at the wake, on the biographical chart it showed a picture of the tree." Diane Spiak. On Williams Street is another white oak and Tammy Stern and her family make oak flour from the acorns. She says, "It's always delicious."

There are many stories about oaks. Robin Hood organized his life around, and within, great oaks. The huge and hollow "Major Oak," as it was called, was where he held meetings with the Merry Men. It still stands today.

In pre-Christian Celtic society, Druids formed an intellectual class comprising philosophers, judges, educators, historians, doctors, seers, astronomers and astrologers. The earliest surviving classical references to Druids date to the 2nd century B.C.E. The word Druidae is of Celtic origin. It is believed to originate from the Greek word "drus," meaning "an oak" and "wid," from the Sanskrit word meaning "to know." The oak was sacred to the Druids and was part of each of their ceremonies.

If oak is known as the King of Trees, the White Oak is known as the King of Kings because of the incredible spread of its crown.



3. JAPANESE MAPLE

In the backyard of an inn this tree has witnessed many a special event. According to Bob Sprague, the tree was planted by Brattleboro Retreat patients when the house was owned by the director of the Retreat. Japanese Maples have been cultivated in Japan for centuries. They are also a desirable choice for bonsai enthusiasts. The Japanese Maple produces outstanding color in fall and winter.



The Little Maple
By Edna Curtis
A small tree stands with
crimson leaves
Blushing quietly in the breeze
Till now it blossomed quiet,
green
Totally bashful and unseen.

What makes the little tree such a treasure
Sparkling red—giving pleasure
To everyone gathered on the street
A cadence to my dancing feet.
Soon the wind and rain will come
Her party dress will be undone
The splendid leaves will disappear
Until this lovely time next year.

4. CAMPERDOWN ELM

It is also known as the umbrella tree or weeping tree. It is a great place for children to hide underneath.

About 1835 - 1840, the Earl of Camperdown's head forester, David Taylor, discovered a mutant contorted branch growing along the ground in the forest at Camperdown House, in Dundee, Scotland. The Earl's gardener produced the first Camperdown Elm by grafting it to the trunk of a Wych Elm. Camperdown Elms are created from a cutting, taken from the original cutting and is usually grafted on a Wych Elm trunk.

This picture from 1989 shows the original Camperdown Elm tree in Dundee, Scotland. Camperdown Elms are hardy (to zone 4), suffering more from summer drought than from winter cold.



5. NORWAY MAPLE

A species of maple native to Europe, Asia, Russia, Scandinavia and Iran.

Norway Maple is a common choice as an ornamental tree, however we now know it is an invasive species and should not be planted. Norway Maple has escaped cultivation and invades forests, fields and other natural habitats. It forms monotypic stands that create dense shade, and it displaces native trees, shrubs and herbs.

Norway Maple has flattened and disk-shaped seeds which are milky inside. Children can open up the edge of the seed and then stick them on their noses to make "pug noses." It is also popular to throw the seeds up into the air and then watch them spin like propellers. Therefore, they are commonly called "helicopters."

The tree you are looking at, like many trees on Brattleboro's Main Street, is adorned with lights throughout the winter season.

6. BUTTERNUT

There is a mix of tree species in this small area, but the one that stands out as special is the Butternut. It is occasionally known as White Walnut. Butternut is native to North America.

You are looking at several Butternuts on the other side of the fence. You can tell the Butternuts because of their grey bark, with its flattened ridges. These Butternuts stand out as special because they appear to be healthy.

Butternut trees are seriously threatened by a fungus which forms a canker disease. In some areas, 90% of the Butternut trees have been killed and, so, it is close to being considered an endangered species. Street trees fare better than woodland trees.

Butternuts live only about 75 years. They begin to bear nuts at about 20 years of age. Having an oily texture and pleasant flavor, the nuts are often used in baking and candy-making. The husks are also used to make a yellowish dye.

Here is a butternut recipe created by Robert Clements
Forager's Salad:
Butternuts, water cress & wild mushrooms.
Add a little salt and pepper and oil. Yum



7. PIN OAK

Planted by Bertie Sprague Sr. in 1990, at which time it was about 4 1/2 feet tall. Fifty trees were planted that day throughout Brattleboro by 30 volunteers. This is a living testament to how fast trees can grow. *Quercus*, a Latin word, is said to be derived from a Celtic word meaning "fine tree." The second part of the species name, *palustris*, comes from the Celtic and means "of wetland."

The Pin Oak is not a long-lived oak, usually living only 90 to 120 years. It is naturally a wetland tree, and develops a shallow, fibrous root system. This makes it quite suitable for sidewalk plantings. Like the Beech tree, it retains its dried leaves throughout the winter.

Its bark was used by some Native American tribes to make a drink for the treatment of intestinal pain.

Nearby is a large White Oak tree. According to Tim and Martha O'Connor: "This tree, as we understand, was planted when our house was constructed in 1866, and is now the last of the original oaks on Oak Street."



8. SILVER MAPLE

Known also as Creek Maple, River Maple, or Silverleaf Maple, is a species of maple native to eastern North America. It grows best near streams and in protected flood plains. It is also a very successful street tree since it has a shallow, fibrous root system, and lives naturally in soil which is compacted—similar to the soil beneath our sidewalks.

Ruth Unsicker writes: "The bulging above-ground roots and the huge trunk

continues to make me pause and admire it each time I pass. I follow the trunk up, up. Its towering branches are open and airy so that the light and sky are visible through its light green foliage."

One distinguishing characteristic of Silver Maples is that they are one of the first trees to flower in the spring. Its flowers emerge from buds set the previous summer. They are greenish-yellow and bloom long before the leaves appear.

Another easily noticeable characteristic of Silver Maples is their long slender branches which first sweep downward and then gracefully curve upward. The undersides of leaves are a shimmering pale gray.

9. This community space was conceived in 2004 by Michael Billingsley as a refuge from the busyness of Brattleboro. Still growing in what was formerly an ornamental garden, are Norway Maple, Fir Concolor, Blue Spruce, Dogwood, Hickory, an Apple tree, and the ground cover pachysandra.



When Michael pulled out a root, he uncovered a gravesite which had a club head painted red. This type of grave, and the red color of the artifact, were part of the traditions of the "Red Painted People" whose closest tribe was in Maine. According to Michael, these people lived from about 5,000 to 1,000 B.C.E. It was their tradition to build a grave at the highest point with a view of the ocean. This site would have been the highest elevation with enough soil for a burial site, and with a view of the Connecticut River. The custom of the "Red Painted People" was to dig a grave five feet deep, and to line it with ocean sand (in this case river sand) and to paint it red. Then the body was covered with more sand, and sacred objects and implements were painted red.

This site is now protected, and no development can occur here. The land is owned by the Red Cross, which has generously made the space available to the public.

CREDITS:

Made possible by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation's Urban & Community Forestry Program

Berkley & Veller Realty

Allard Lumber Co.

Brattleboro Reformer

Bob George: Photographer

Jeff Nugent: Cartographer

Lauren Henry: Graphic Designer

Brattleboro Tree Advisory Board

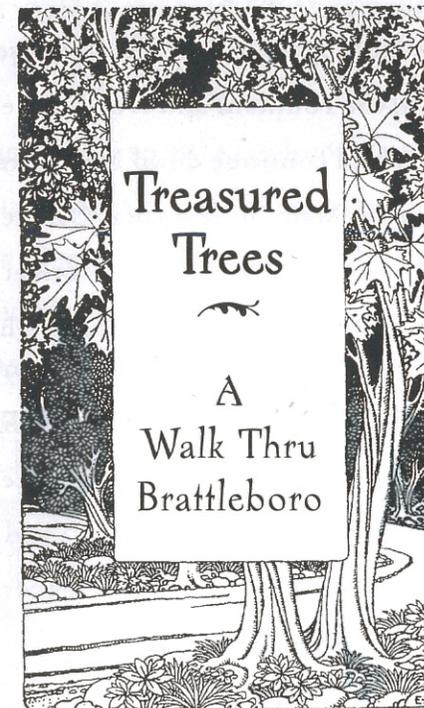
Lynn Levine: Project Manager



BRATTLEBORO TREE ADVISORY BOARD

*To be an advocate for the citizens of
Brattleboro concerning their public trees.*

Town of Brattleboro
The Tree Advisory Board
230 Main Street
Brattleboro, Vermont 05301
treeboard@brattleboro.org



NORTH