

Virgin Forest Remnants on Campus

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What Kind of Trees are They?

The Virgin Forest Remnants on campus are all Oak trees, which means they're all in the *Quercus* Genus. They are mostly either Black Oaks (*Quercus veluntina*) or White Oaks (*Quercus alba*), but there is one Northern Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*) in Galpin Woods. Northern Red Oaks are known for their brick-red autumn leaves and its large acorns that mature by late summer. Black Oaks are in the same group as Red Oaks and is very close in appearance to the Red Oak. The Black Oak is also known for good fall color with leaves ranging from yellow to brick red. White Oaks are known for producing relatively large acorns in great abundance and their fall color being reddish-brown to reddish-purple. All the Oaks are known to be relatively problem free and adaptable.

Where are the Virgin Forest Remnants on Campus?

Notes: List is based on trees listed on [TreeKeeper](#) for the College of Wooster, further information about exact location of trees can be found there using the Site ID. It should be noted that the state of some of the trees on the list is uncertain. Inventory dates were over 10 years ago, and some of the trees included in the previous inventory may no longer be standing.



Map from TreeKeeper

The above map shows the locations of the Virgin Forest Trees or sites where the trees once stood that are now vacant lots. The black line indicates the edge of campus, and the green dots represent a tree site.

Douglass Woods:

- Site ID 48-Black Oak, Diameter 44
 - o Last inventory date 2011
- Site ID 47-Black Oak, Diameter 33
 - o Last inventory date 2011

Library:

- Site ID 246-White Oak Diameter 38
 - o Last inventory date 2011
- Site ID 247-White Oak Diameter 42
 - o Last inventory date 2011
- Site ID 251-White Oak Diameter 31
 - o Last inventory date 2011

Ebert Woods:

- Site ID 349-White Oak, Diameter 42
 - o Last inventory date 2011
- Site ID 352-Black Oak, Diameter 38
 - o Last inventory date 2011
- Site ID 353-White Oak, Diameter 28
 - o Last inventory date 2011
- Site ID 354-White Oak Diameter 36
 - o Last inventory date 2011
- Site ID 439-White Oak, Diameter 36
 - o Last inventory date 2011
- Site ID 445-White Oak, Diameter 36
 - o Last inventory date 2011
- Site ID 411- White Oak, Diameter 32
 - o Last inventory date 2016
- Site ID 410-White Oak, Diameter 38
 - o Last inventory date 2011
- Site ID 408-White Oak, Diameter 42
 - o Last inventory date 2011

Galpin Woods:

- Site ID 619- Northern Red Oak, Diameter 26
 - o Last inventory date 2016
- Site ID 620- White Oak, Diameter 32
 - o Last inventory date 2016
- Site ID 622- White Oak, Diameter 38
 - o Last Inventory date 2011
- Site ID 696- White Oak, Diameter 42
 - o Last inventory date 2015
- Site ID 697- White Oak, Diameter 32
 - o Last Inventory date 2011
- Site ID 698- White Oak, Diameter 40
 - o Last Inventory date 2011
- Site ID 710- White Oak, Diameter 34
 - o Last Inventory date 2011
- Site ID 742- White Oak, Diameter 44
 - o Last Inventory date 2016
- Site ID 745- White Oak, Diameter 32
 - o Last Inventory date 2016
- Site ID 765- White Oak, Diameter 34
 - o Last Inventory date 2011
- Site ID 795- Black Oak, Diameter 52
 - o Last Inventory date 2016
- Site ID 798- White Oak, Diameter 40
 - o Last Inventory date 2016

Grad Site:

- Site ID 862- White Oak, Diameter 38, Location: Grad Site
 - o Last Inventory date 2011
- Site ID 899- White Oak, Diameter 40, Location: Grad Site
 - o Last Inventory date 2011

Other Locations:

- Site ID 867- White Oak, Diameter 42, Location: Unassigned (near Art Museum)
 - o Last Inventory date 2011
- Site ID 868- White Oak, Diameter 41, Location: Unassigned (near Art Museum)
 - o Last Inventory date 2011
- Site ID 869- White Oak, Diameter 49, Location: by Quad baseball backstop
 - o Last Inventory date 2011

- Site ID 872- White Oak, Diameter 46, Location: Unassigned (behind Art Museum)
 - Last Inventory date 2011
- Site ID 243-White Oak, Diameter 55, Location: Unassigned, near Beall Ave
 - Last inventory date 2016

What Might be affecting the Virgin Forest Trees?

Other than age there are some factors that may be affecting our Virgin Forest Trees on Campus. Rising temperature, wetter conditions and more frequent and intense precipitation events in the Midcontinent of North America may all cause a variety of climate responses in trees. In 2025 COW Tree Ring Lab Faculty, staff and students teamed up to publish the results of an analysis of some white oak tree-ring sites in Northeastern Ohio, including some of the virgin forest trees at the college, to look at what is driving the changing climate response of trees. They found that old-growth white oaks have lost moisture sensitivity, which means summer precipitation has a lower impact on growth. The projected decrease in summer precipitation and increase in range of summer temperature would continue to increase the moisture stress on trees, which is when a tree suffers from an inability to tolerate soil moisture conditions. This could be due to a number of factors such as too much moisture, too little, or physical damage from snow, ice or erosion.

Stories about the Virgin Forest Remnants

Site ID-243, White Oak next to Kauke



White Oak, Photo by Keara Lennox

This tree has been through it and keeps on standing. Some call it Art the Oak. It has been determined to be over 300 years old by the College of Wooster Geology department, but it could stay alive for another 200 years or longer. This tree can be seen in old photos of Old Main (predecessor to Kauke) and has burns from when Old Maine burned down in 1901.

Black Oak in Galpin Woods, on previous tree walk



Photo from *COW News*

In August of 2021 a Black Oak in Galpin woods, the area between Galpin and the Art Museum, fell due to “natural failure”. The tree could no longer hold itself up because of the moisture in it and simply fell. No one was injured and no property was damaged, but the loss of this tree was felt, as it had a notable presence on campus, both as tree that was here when the college was founded and the centerpiece of a group of trees once known as “the Contemplation Site”. It was also featured in the previous edition of the Tree Walk and the plaque for it still stands by the stump that was left when the tree fell. The tree was determined to be 288 years old by Nick Wiesenberg, Geology Technician in Earth Sciences, here at the college.



Stump in 2026, Photo by Keara Lennox

Sources

TreeKeeper- <https://collegeofwoosteroh.treekeepersoftware.com/index.cfm?deviceWidth=1920>

<https://wooster.edu/2021/08/18/centuries-old-black-oak-falls-on-wooster-campus/>

Previous Tree Guide

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1125786525000219>

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/agricultural-and-biological-sciences/moisture-stress>

<https://ohiodnr.gov/discover-and-learn/plants-trees/broad-leaf-trees/red-oak-Quercus-rubra>

<https://ohiodnr.gov/discover-and-learn/plants-trees/broad-leaf-trees/black-oak-Quercus-velutina>

<https://ohiodnr.gov/discover-and-learn/plants-trees/broad-leaf-trees/white-oak-Quercus-alba>