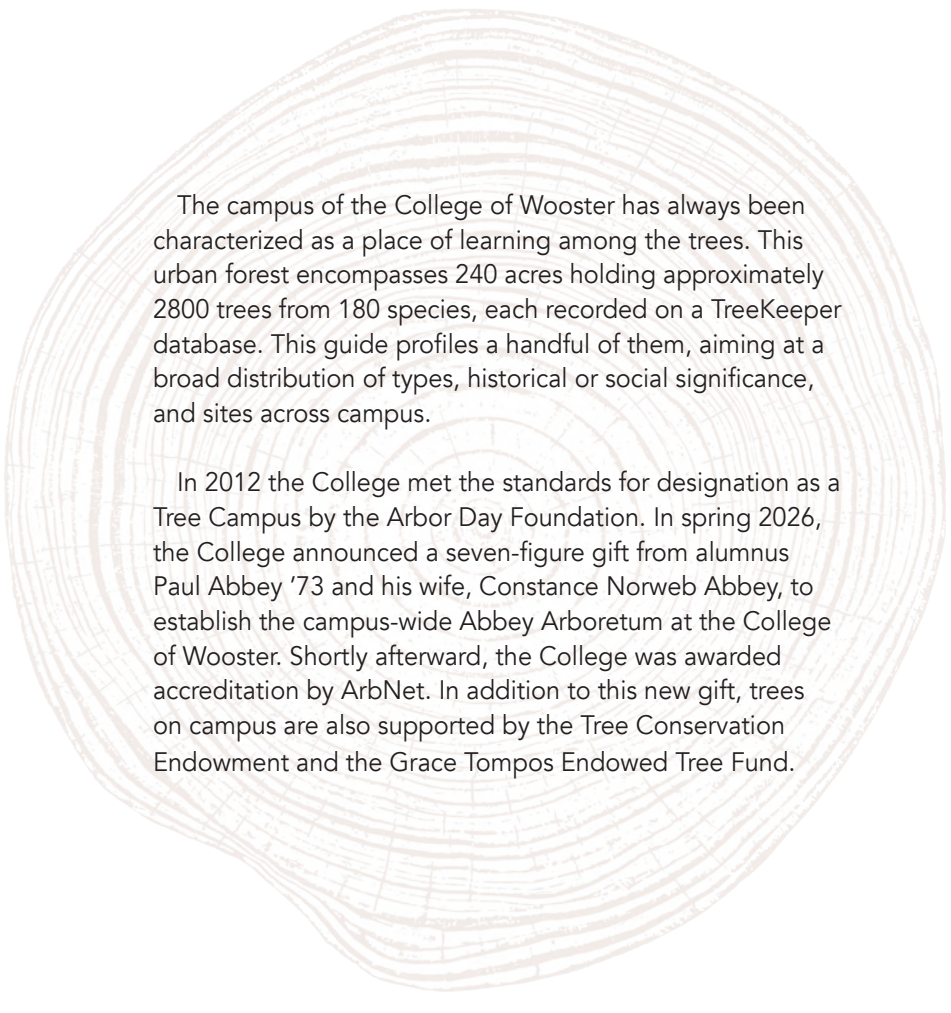


# THE COLLEGE OF WOOSTER **TREE WALK**





The campus of the College of Wooster has always been characterized as a place of learning among the trees. This urban forest encompasses 240 acres holding approximately 2800 trees from 180 species, each recorded on a TreeKeeper database. This guide profiles a handful of them, aiming at a broad distribution of types, historical or social significance, and sites across campus.

In 2012 the College met the standards for designation as a Tree Campus by the Arbor Day Foundation. In spring 2026, the College announced a seven-figure gift from alumnus Paul Abbey '73 and his wife, Constance Norweb Abbey, to establish the campus-wide Abbey Arboretum at the College of Wooster. Shortly afterward, the College was awarded accreditation by ArbNet. In addition to this new gift, trees on campus are also supported by the Tree Conservation Endowment and the Grace Tompos Endowed Tree Fund.

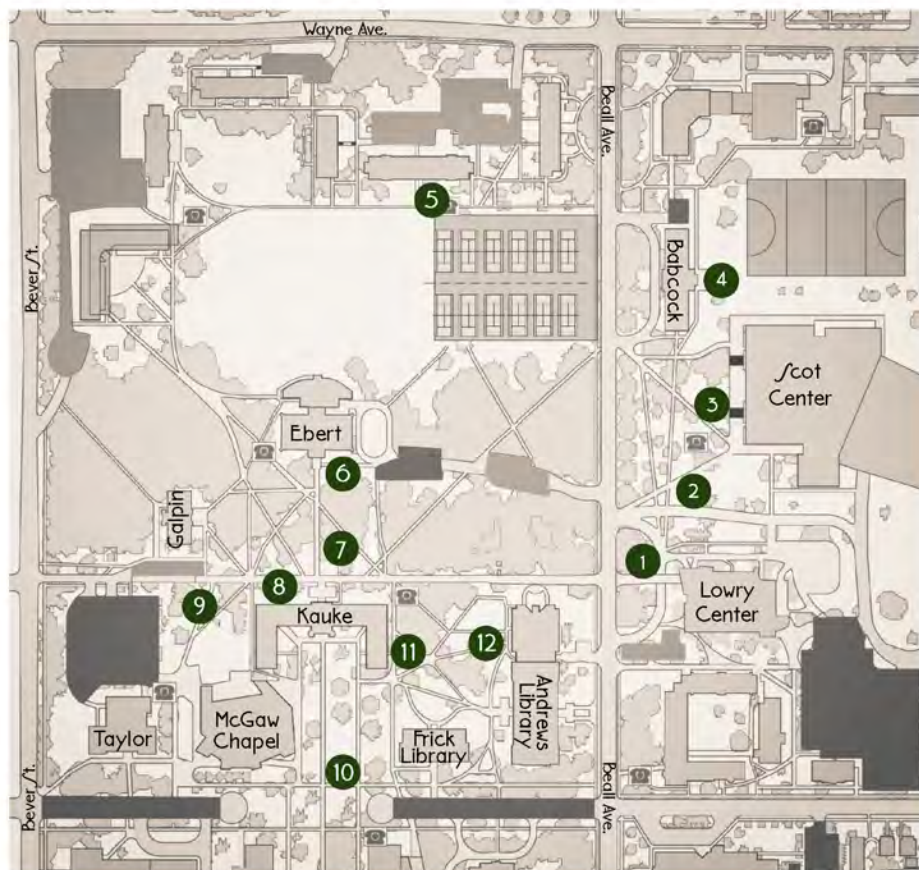
Find the Wooster TreeKeeper database here:  
<https://collegeofwoosteroh.treekeepersoftware.com/index>

For questions or information about trees on campus, contact Phil Olsen, Manager of Grounds, at [polsen@wooster.edu](mailto:polsen@wooster.edu).

The first edition of the Tree Walk was created by the College Grounds Department with Beau Mastrine, retired horticulturist Mark Niemczyk, and Phil Olsen. In Spring 2026, students in the Museum Studies course, "Engaging Museum Audiences," updated it in preparation for the Fall 2026 exhibition *Radically Rooted* at the College of Wooster Art Museum. This exhibition and its programs are made possible by the generous support of the Muriel Koslow Art Exhibition Fund.

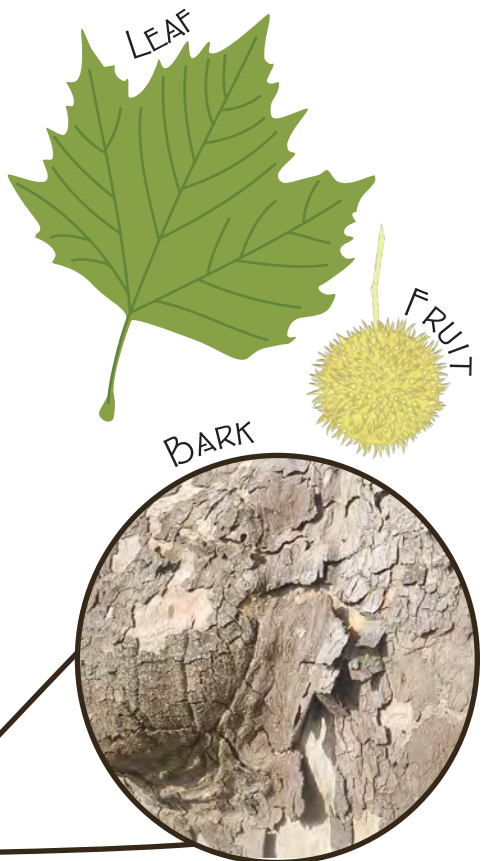
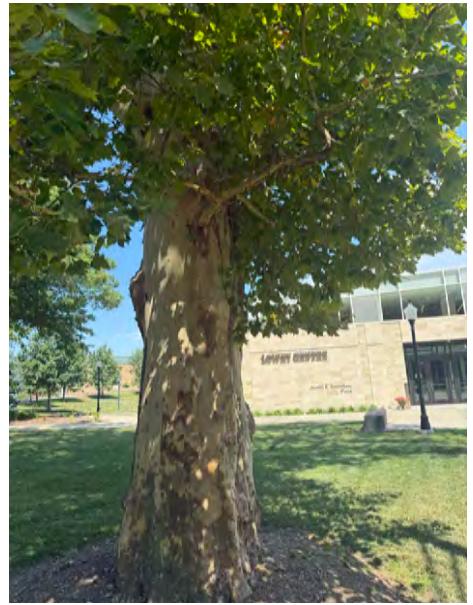


# THE COLLEGE OF WOOSTER CAMPUS MAP



- |                      |                           |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. London Plane      | 7. Umbrella Magnolia      |
| 2. American Sycamore | 8. Japanese Umbrella Pine |
| 3. Scotch Elm        | 9. Weeping European Beech |
| 4. Paperbark Maple   | 10. Willow Oak            |
| 5. Slippery Elm      | 11. White Oak             |
| 6. Northern Red Oak  | 12. Ginko                 |





# 1. LONDON PLANE

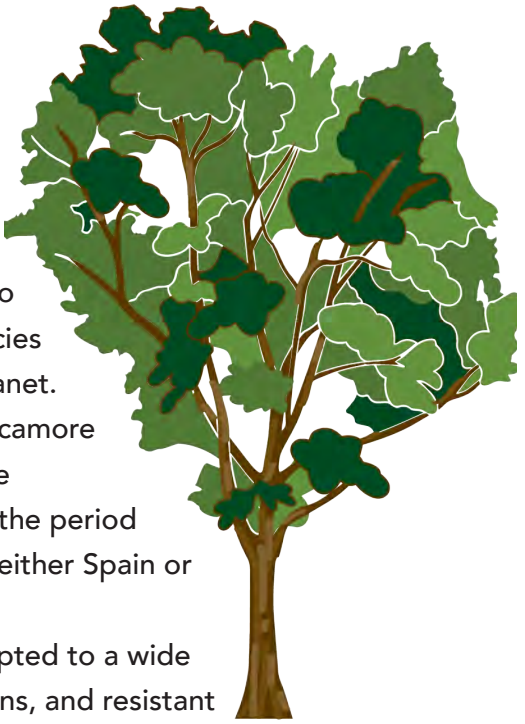
*Platanus acerifolia*,  
*platanus x hispanica* or  
*platanus hybrida*

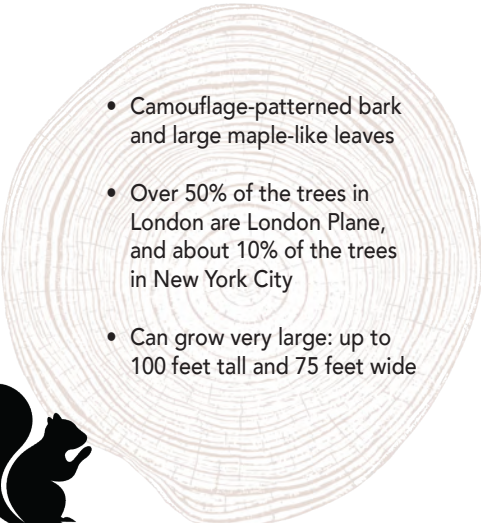
Planting date: Unknown

Discovered in the 17th century, the London plane is now known to be a hybrid of two sycamore species living on opposite sides of the planet. Its parents, the Eurasian plane/sycamore and the American plane/sycamore encountered one another during the period of colonization and hybridized in either Spain or England in the 1640s.

Vigorous and fast-growing, adapted to a wide range of climate and soil conditions, and resistant to pollution, the London Plane proved to be an excellent urban shade tree, widely planted in the renewal of European cities during the Industrial Revolution.

An American plane (see #2, next page) is planted nearby at the Scot Center. Compare leaf shape, bark texture, and seed balls between these two related species.



- 
- Camouflage-patterned bark and large maple-like leaves
  - Over 50% of the trees in London are London Plane, and about 10% of the trees in New York City
  - Can grow very large: up to 100 feet tall and 75 feet wide





## 2. AMERICAN SYCAMORE OR PLANETREE

*Platanus occidentalis*

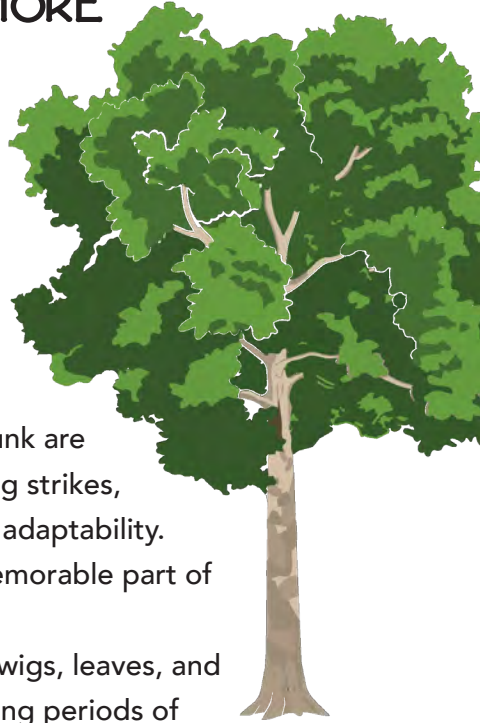
Planting date: 1910-1920

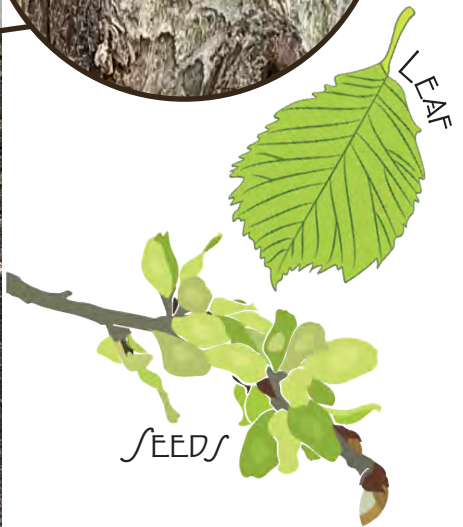
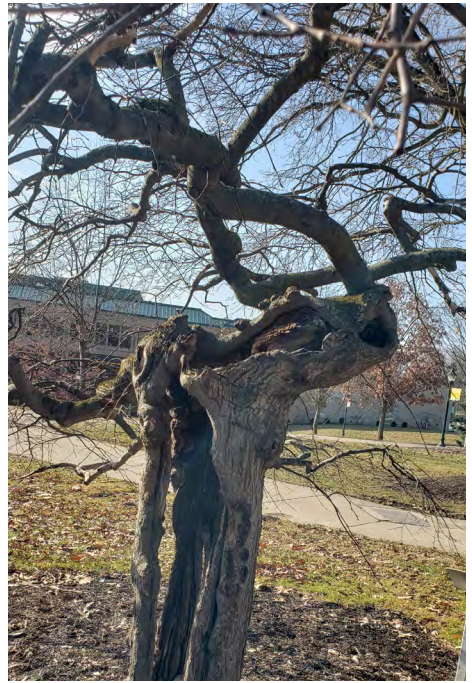
One of the largest native hardwood trees in North America, the American sycamore towers above the campus landscape with its peeling bark and wide canopy.

On the western side of the lower trunk are burn marks from two known lightning strikes, making it a symbol of resilience and adaptability. Its shade and presence make it a memorable part of campus life.

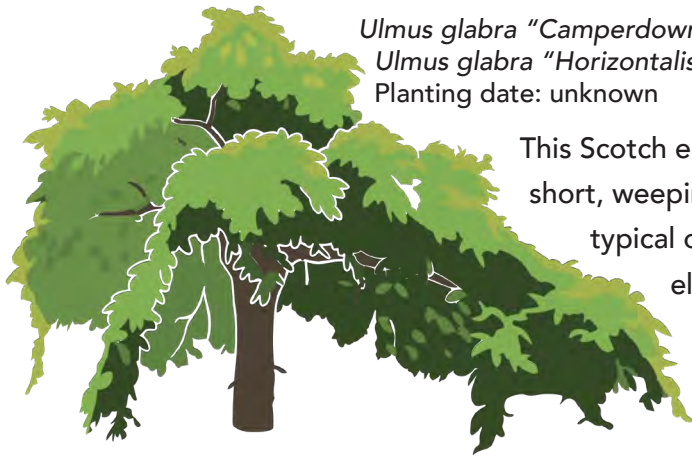
The tree constantly sheds seeds, twigs, leaves, and bark that linger on the ground for long periods of time. Despite the mess, the tree remains an enduring reminder of strength, survival, and the changing rhythms of the seasons.

- Kailene Schaefer '27





### 3. SCOTCH ELM (CAMPERDOWN OR HORIZONTALIS CULTIVAR)



*Ulmus glabra* "Camperdown" or  
*Ulmus glabra* "Horizontalis"  
Planting date: unknown

This Scotch elm is notable for its short, weeping stature, a trait typical of the Camperdown elm cultivar. The tree will never grow taller, but instead grows horizontally. The

original contorted elm specimen from which this tree is descended was found in the forest of Camperdown House, Scotland, in the mid-19th century. After the house's gardener successfully reproduced it by grafting, the Camperdown elm became prized by collectors.

Walk around towards the back of the tree to see that most of the trunk is hollow. Nevertheless, its persistent survival and unique appearance has left the groundskeeping crew reluctant to remove it.

- Emma McKone '26



- This species can only be created by grafting branches descended from the original specimen
- Donated by Captain and Mrs. James B. Taylor to the college, it is the last remaining specimen from a collection of exotic plants.





SEEDS



LEAF

BARK



## 4. PAPERBARK MAPLE

*Acer griseum*

Planting date: 1994

The paperbark maple is named for the texture of its bark that peels like paper. This non-native tree was planted at the college in 1994 and in 2009, it became part of the Corey Cline Memorial Garden after the passing of three-year old Corey in a tragic traffic accident.

Corey was son of Doug and Lauren Cline, both of whom worked at the College: Doug, then the assistant basketball coach (now head coach), and Lauren as an administrative coordinator for residential life. Corey was well known and loved on campus, attending the Campus Nursery School and spending time with the basketball team. His teachers described him with a "big beautiful dimpled smile that lit up the entire room. His outgoing nature made him a caring and helpful friend to all." A colleague of his mother said "Corey was energy, light and spunk, wrapped in dimples and shining eyes."

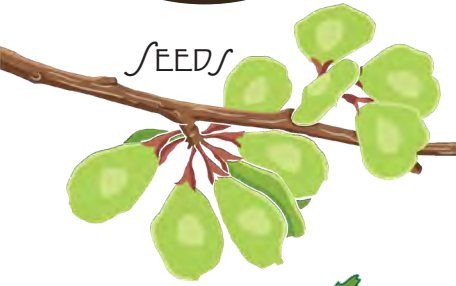
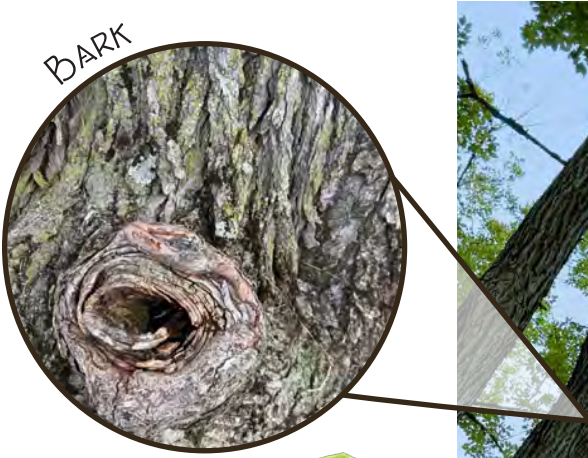
The paperbark maple stands as the largest plant in this peaceful garden, representing the reach of the community as they came together to honor a life lost too soon.

- Caroline Wilkes '26



- Slow growing tree
- Helicopter seed pods
- Now endangered in its native habitat of Central China





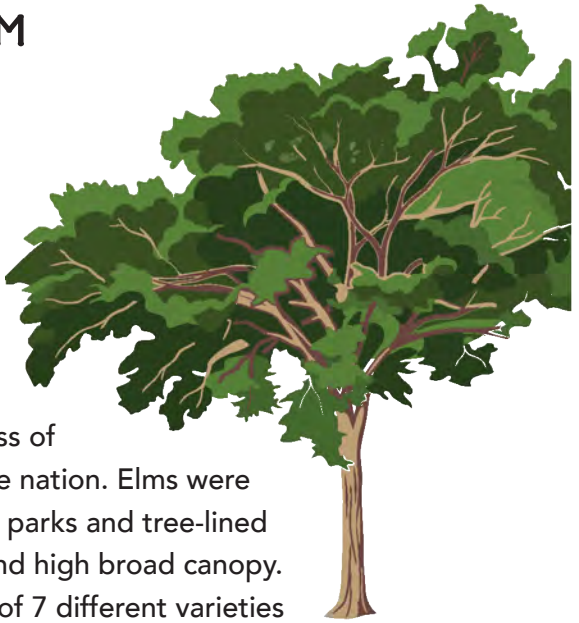
# 5. SLIPPERY ELM

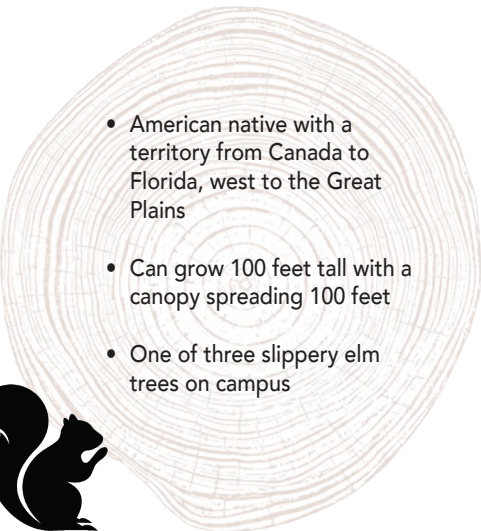
*Ulmus rubra*

Planting date: unknown

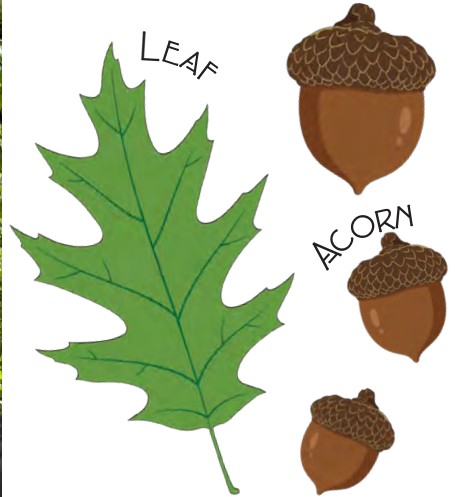
At one time over 400 large elm trees grew on campus. The arrival of Dutch elm disease, a fungus spread by elm bark beetles, beginning in the 1920s resulted in the loss of millions of elm trees across the nation. Elms were highly favored shade trees for parks and tree-lined streets for their fast growth and high broad canopy. There are fewer than 70 elms of 7 different varieties now on campus. Slippery elms such as this are more resistant to the disease, and the elms on campus have been repeatedly injected with fungicides to slow the spread and prolong their lives.

The inner bark of this species is mucilaginous, or slippery, and has long been used in natural remedies for sore throat and stomach ailments.



- 
- American native with a territory from Canada to Florida, west to the Great Plains
  - Can grow 100 feet tall with a canopy spreading 100 feet
  - One of three slippery elm trees on campus





# 6. NORTHERN RED OAK

*Ulmus rubra*

Planting date: unknown

Marking the beginning of a tradition for the graduating class to plant a tree, this red oak was planted by the Class of 2001. Since then, a class tree has been planted each year; many of these are the younger trees in the Oak Grove. This tradition creates a lasting connection to the Wooster community, as the tree persists after the students leave and ensures the renewal of the Oak Grove.

Northern red oaks are native to Ohio. Widely distributed through the eastern United States and southeastern Canada, the Northern red oak is named for its red fall foliage color, red petioles, and reddish interior wood.



- Keara Lennox '26



- Grows more than 2 feet a year for the first 10 years
- Produces both catkins and acorns
- Native to the Great Lakes Region

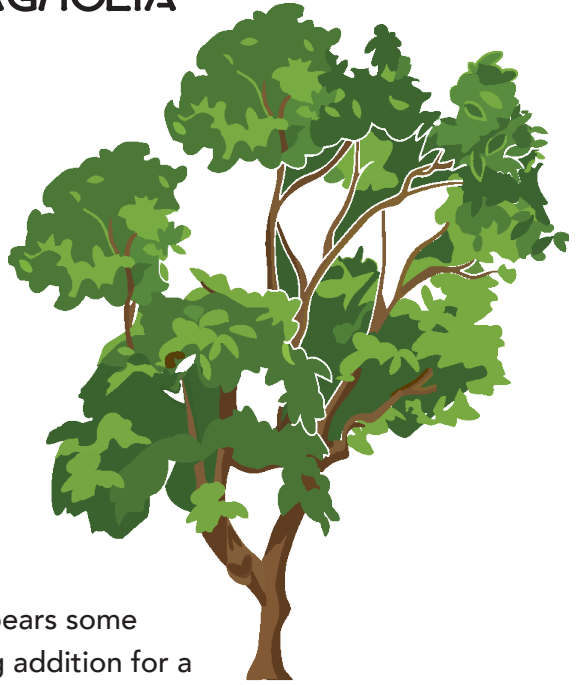




# 7. UMBRELLA MAGNOLIA

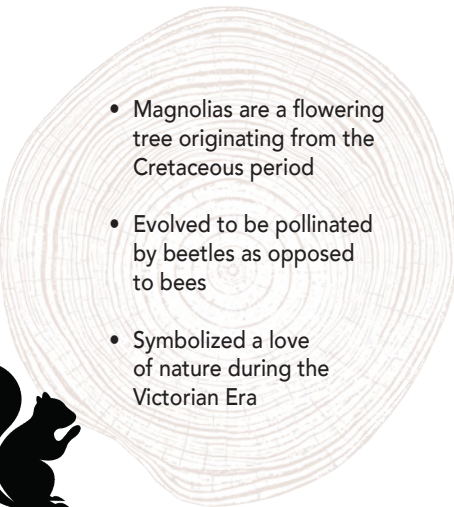
*Magnolia tripetala*  
Planting Date: 1962

This unusual tree is the only one of its kind on campus and can be easily identified by the numerous bumps and knots on the trunk. The umbrella magnolia has long leaves that are so heavy that the tips tend to hang down and provide an umbrella effect from those standing underneath the tree during a rain. A tear in its lower bark bears some semblance of a heart, a fitting addition for a tree closely tied to the campus community.



Sitting between Kauke Hall and Ebert Art Center, this magnolia has been at the center of campus life since its donation in 1962 by the Class of 1912 for their 50th reunion.

- Alaina Walker '29

- 
- Magnolias are a flowering tree originating from the Cretaceous period
  - Evolved to be pollinated by beetles as opposed to bees
  - Symbolized a love of nature during the Victorian Era





NEEDLES

BARK



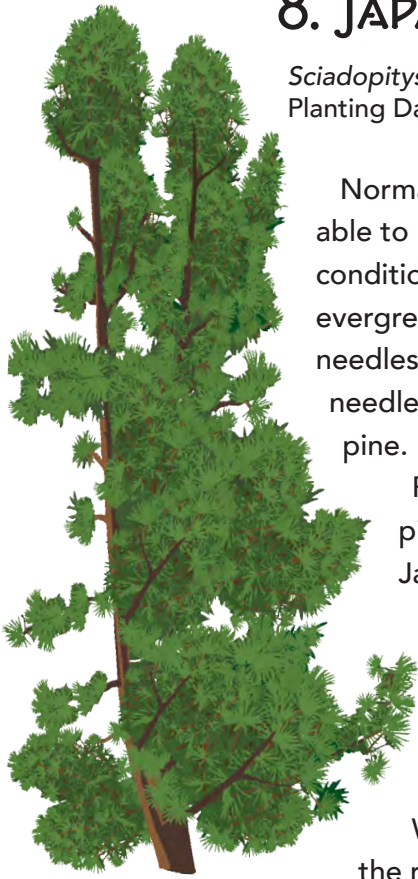
PINECONE



# 8. JAPANESE UMBRELLA PINE

*Sciadopitys verticillata*

Planting Date: August 2003



Normally growing around 25-35 feet but able to reach heights of 70 to 90 feet in ideal conditions, the Japanese umbrella pine is an evergreen conifer with dark, thick, long waxy needles that forms an umbrella-like whorl of needles, differing from the usual tufts of other pine.

Rare to find in the wild, the umbrella pine naturally grows in river basins of Japan. Historically protected as one of the "five sacred trees of Kiso" (a forested valley in Japan), the umbrella pine could not be cut without permission on penalty of death.

This tree was donated by Phil Williams and planted in 2003 as part of the renovation of Kauke Hall.



- Meghan Neville '26

- Grows slowly at a rate of 6" or less a year
- Does not drop its needles like most pine trees
- Fossil evidence of this species dates back over 230 million years to the Triassic period





LEAF



SEED POD



BARK

# 9. WEEPING EUROPEAN BEECH

*Fagus Sylvatica*

Planting date: 1998

The boughs of this weeping European beech hang low, creating a "secret room" hiding a bench, allowing you and a friend to hide away from the busyness of campus. The grounds crew have intentionally pruned this tree to create two entrances leading to the enclosed space underneath.

The bark of this tree is silvery and the dark green leaves turn a golden bronze color in the fall.

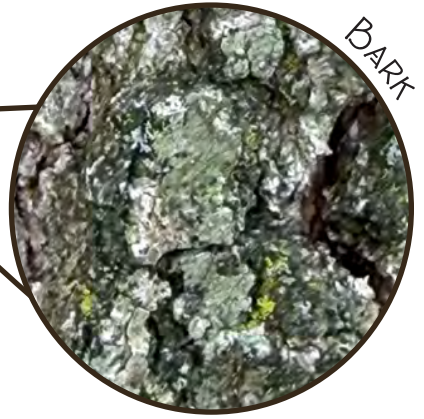
Donated in 1998 by Grace M. Tompos, former Director of Development at the college, the tree is dedicated to "celebrating life." This tree is one of many benefiting from Grace's generosity: The Grace Tompos Endowed Tree Fund, established in 2001 in her honor, continues to plant, care for, and maintain campus trees.



- Hattie Wagner '28

- 
- Grows a foot a year
  - When mature branches touch the ground they can undergo "layering," developing roots directly in the soil to form new shoots
  - Can live to be over 100



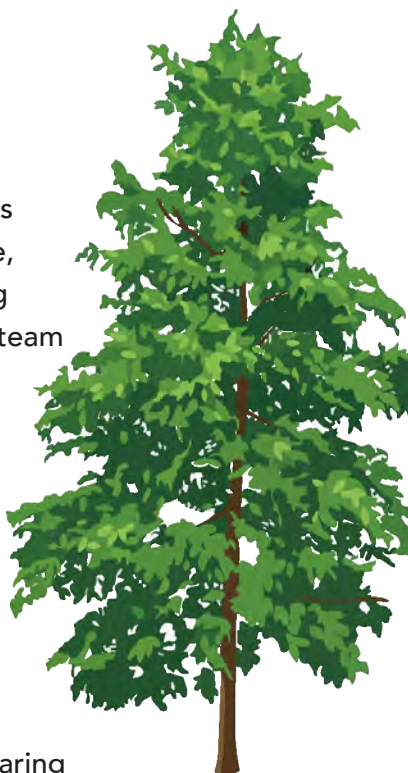


# 10. WILLOW OAK

*Quercus phellos*

Planting date: April 27, 2018 (Arbor Day)

The Campus Grounds Crew selected this willow oak to honor their young colleague, Clayton Geib. Clayton played as a starting offensive lineman on the college football team and tragically passed away from natural causes following a game in September 2017. He excelled in chemistry and had applied to graduate school with the intention of pursuing a research career. Those who knew Clayton held him in high regard as a hard worker and excellent teammate in academics, athletics, and at work. He was beloved for his contagious enthusiasm, passion for discussion and sharing knowledge, and cheerful, genuine, caring personality. This tree stands as a reminder of an ideal Wooster student.



The first willow oaks on campus were planted in 1969 in front of the newly constructed Lowry Center. Willow oaks are highly valued for their resilience in urban environments and acorns from the original Lowry trees have been propagated by the staff at Secrest Arboretum.

- 
- Distinctive for long slender leaves with smooth edges like those of a willow tree
  - Native to the US and thrives in humid temperate climates
  - A fast-growing shade tree that can live more than 100 years





LEAF

ACORN

BARK

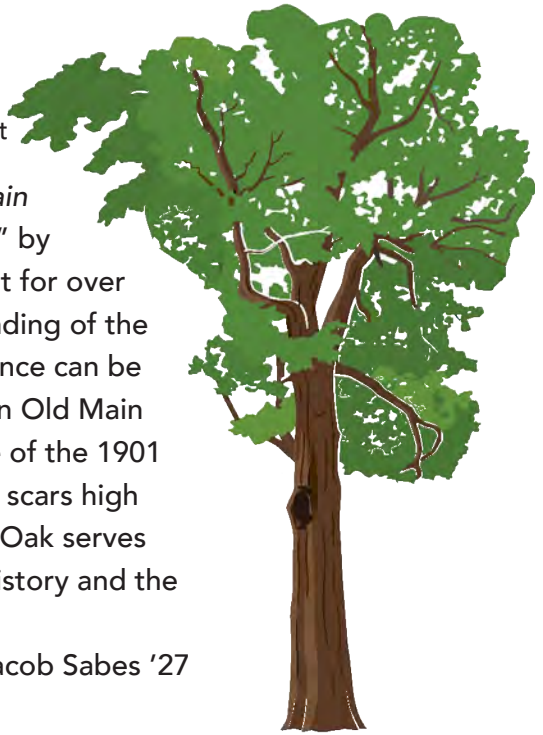
# 11. WHITE OAK

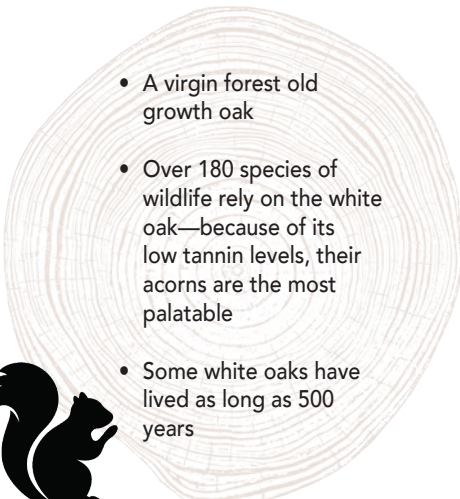
*Quercus alba*

Planting date: unknown, Virgin Forest

This tree known as the *Old Main Oak*, fondly called “Art the Oak” by some, has lived in this exact spot for over 300 years--since before the founding of the United States. Proof of its presence can be found in photographs from when Old Main was still standing, and evidence of the 1901 Old Main fire can still be seen in scars high up on the trunk. This significant Oak serves as a reminder of the College’s history and the resilience of trees.

- Jacob Sabes '27

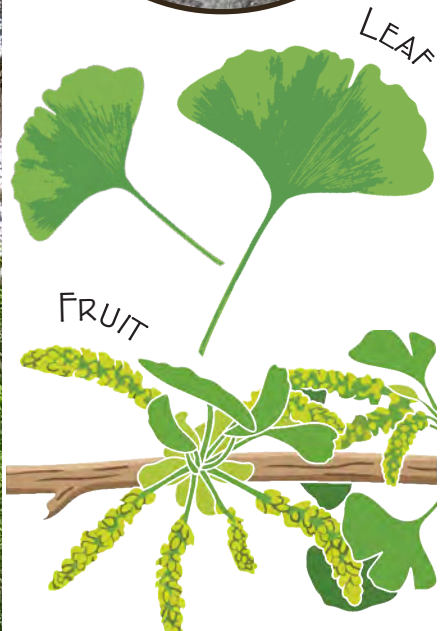


- 
- A virgin forest old growth oak
  - Over 180 species of wildlife rely on the white oak—because of its low tannin levels, their acorns are the most palatable
  - Some white oaks have lived as long as 500 years





BARK



LEAF

FRUIT

## 12. GINKGO OR MAIDENHAIR TREE

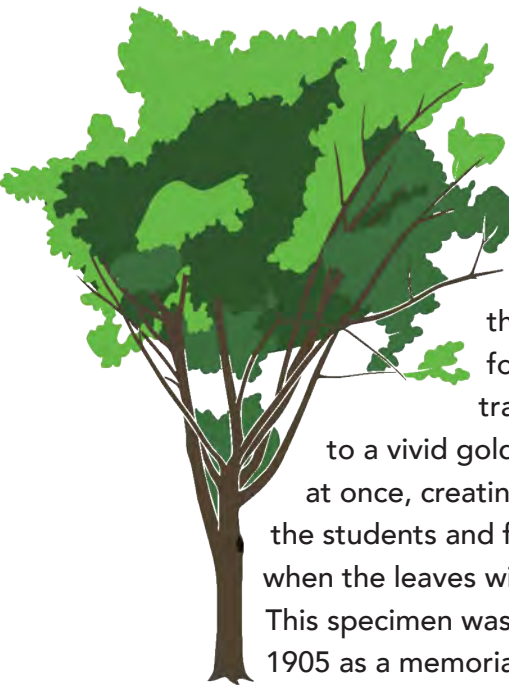
*Ginkgo biloba*

Planting date: 1955

The Ginkgo is often described as a "living fossil," as a species that has remained largely unchanged for many millennia. In the fall, the tree transforms dramatically. Its leaves shift to a vivid golden color before dropping almost all at once, creating a brief but memorable display for the students and faculty as they make their guesses on when the leaves will fall.

This specimen was planted in 1955 by the Class of 1905 as a memorial to 17 deceased classmates.

- Grace Gishenko '29

- 
- 
- Native today to eastern China, but once also grew across North America
  - Also known as the maidenhair tree for its leaves' resemblance to those of the maidenhair fern
  - Commonly only male trees are planted to avoid the strong odor of the fruit produced by female trees





THE COLLEGE OF  
**WOOSTER**