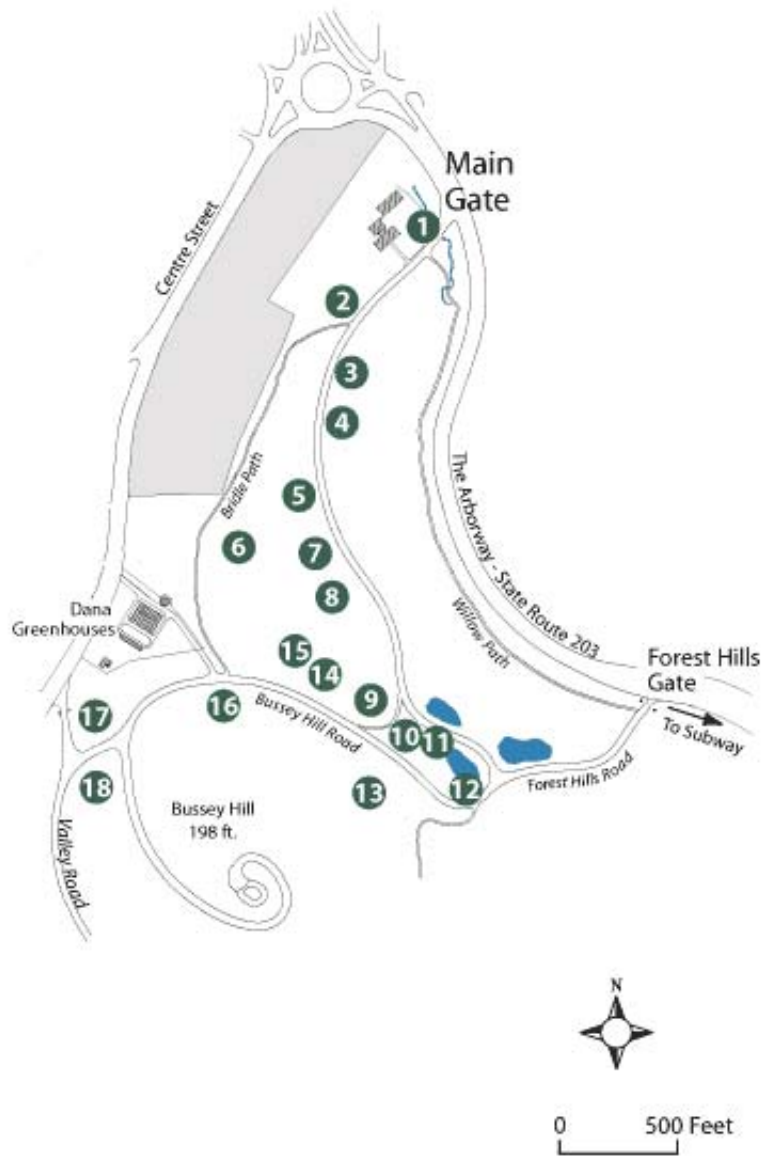


# Centenarians

1. *Magnolia acuminata*  
CUCUMBER MAGNOLIA
2. *Liriodendron tulipifera*  
TULIP TREE
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JAPANESE SPICEBUSH
16. *Symplocos paniculata*  
SAPPHIREBERRY
17. *Platanus x acerifolia*  
LONDON PLANETREE
18. *Juglans nigra*  
BLACK WALNUT



Explore 18 of our more than 700 trees and shrubs that are 100+ years old.

In the landscape, each plant is labeled with a gold tag in addition to the typical copper label. The accession year listed here indicates when the plant was obtained by the Arboretum (as a seed, cutting, or seedling, etc.). It does not necessarily represent the year the specimen was planted in the landscape.

**1. *Magnolia acuminata***

CUCUMBER MAGNOLIA

*Accessioned 1880*

The common name of this North American native refers to its fruits, which are cucumber-shaped and reddish in color. Its greenish-yellow flower supplies the pigment that creates the unusual and increasingly popular, hybrid, yellow-flowered magnolias. ('Elizabeth' is a prime example.) Though the tree grows rapidly, it may take 25 to 30 years to reach flowering size.



**2. *Liriodendron tulipifera***

TULIP TREE

*Accessioned 1894*

One of the tallest trees native to North America, the tulip tree is one of only two species in the genus *Liriodendron*. In cultivation it will reach up to 90 feet, but it may grow to 190 feet in the wild. The tulip tree is an excellent lumber tree—its trunk is very straight and it branches a good distance up the trunk. Early settlers recognized this characteristic and used it for dugout canoes. The name tulip tree refers to the greenish-yellow, tulip-shaped flowers that bloom in spring. These flowers turn into an attractive fruit that looks like the skeleton of a tulip and persists through winter.



**3. *Cercidiphyllum japonicum***

KATSURA TREE

*Accessioned 1878*

In late March and early April, katsura is covered with tiny, purple-red flowers. In fall, its leaves turn a clear yellow to apricot color, and the tree gives off a pleasant aroma of burnt sugar. The Arboretum's specimens are 30 to 50 feet tall, but in their native forests (they are endemic to Japan and China), they achieve a height of 100 feet and a girth greater than any other deciduous tree. In Japan the katsura is commonly used as timber. In this country, it is valued for its distinctive heart-shaped leaves and spreading habit.



**4. *Acer saccharinum***

SILVER MAPLE

*Accessioned 1881*

The leaves of silver maples are bright green with silvery undersides that flash in a breeze. In fall, the deeply lobed leaves turn a clear yellow. With age, the bark takes on a silver-gray hue and becomes shaggy. The silver maple can produce a high-quality syrup although the sap is not as sweet or as abundant as that of the sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*). Native to eastern North America, it is the fastest growing of the maple species (50 feet in 20 years). Once a common street tree, laws prohibiting such use arose when it acquired a reputation for brittleness. Proper pruning practices, however, can reduce breakage of limbs, as demonstrated by this tree. It not only survived the Hurricane of 1938, but at over 120 feet, is the tallest tree in the Arboretum.



**5. *Phellodendron amurense* var. *amurense***

AMUR CORKTREE

*Accessioned 1882*

This stately tree's thick bark is fissured and springy to the touch. The Asiatic corktrees belong to the citrus family, and their compound leaves contain aromatic oils. In autumn the leaves turn a bright but short-lived yellow. The blue-black berries that female trees produce in October persist after the leaves have fallen and are a favorite of mourning doves. Although it is called the corktree, the commercial source of cork is not *Phellodendron* but *Quercus suber* (cork oak), which is not hardy in this climate.



**6. *Sasa senanensis***

PALM-LEAVED BAMBOO

*Accessioned 1891*

Bamboo in New England? Yes, it's not exclusive to tropical climates. Palm-leaved bamboo withstands the cold winters of the Northeast and has flourished here for more than a hundred years. The Arboretum's planting was propagated from stock from Sapporo, Japan. Its evergreen foliage adds a patch of green in an otherwise brown winter landscape.



**7. *Koelreuteria paniculata***

GOLDENRAINTREE

*Accessioned 1899*

The common name of this Asian native refers to its golden yellow flower. The blooms open in July and cover the tree's canopy; the flowers fall to the ground, bringing to mind a gentle, golden rain. Later in the season the flowers turn into papery, brown capsules reminiscent of Chinese lanterns. Each capsule contains a few round, black seeds the size of a pea. Some Asians use these seeds as ornamental beads. Though its flower and fruit look delicate, the goldenraintree is known to be tough, tolerating drought, heat, wind, and pollution, making it a perfect choice for urban environments.



**8. *Ostrya virginiana* var. *virginiana***

AMERICAN HOPHORNBEAM

*Accessioned 1873*

The immature fruit of the american hophornbeam is easily mistaken for pale green flowers dangling from the branches. Each seed is enclosed in a soft, membranous, inflated bladder; these bladders overlap and resemble the fruit of hops, as the common name suggests. The name *Ostrya* comes from the Greek for a tree with very hard wood. And indeed, hophornbeam wood is remarkably hard and strong—possibly a result of the tree's very slow growth, which halts in the small to medium range.

**9. *Cladrastis kentuckea***

YELLOWWOOD

*Accessioned 1881*

The yellowwood is native to the southeastern United States, but it is also hardy in Boston and farther north; it survives temperatures from minus-25 to minus-30 degrees Fahrenheit. The leaves emerge a bright yellowish-green, creating a splash of color in the spring landscape. They change to a vibrant green as the season progresses. Fragrant white flowers appear in late May, hanging in pendulous, wisteria-like clusters from the ends of the branches. The tree's common name refers to the color of the freshly cut heartwood.



**10. *Gymnocladus dioica***

KENTUCKY COFFEETREE

*Accessioned 1873*

A native of North America, this deciduous tree has dark, scaly bark and small, broad leaflets. The coffeetree is a member of the pea family, and its name is derived from the tree's coffeebean-shaped seeds, which are suspended in thick pods. Early settlers learned that appearances can be deceiving: they tried to brew coffee from the "beans" and got a bitter beverage that was abandoned once true coffee became available. Today, the kentucky coffeetree is prized for its bold branch and twig patterns that provide winter interest in the landscape. In fact, the name *gymnocladus* is Greek for "naked twigs."



**11. *Hamamelis virginiana***

COMMON WITCHHAZEL

*Accessioned 1883*

The common name *witchhazel* testifies to the early colonists' belief that the branches of this tree could be used as divining rods. One of the latest flowering plants in the Arboretum, common witchhazel bears its fragrant yellow flowers with their ribbon-like petals in October. The flowers possess the unusual ability to roll up their petals for protection from freeze damage.



**12. *Cornus mas***

CORNELIAN CHERRY

*Accessioned 1883*

In flower the cornelian cherry bears little resemblance to its cousin, our native flowering dogwood, *Cornus florida*, but this import from Europe and Asia is just as beautiful. Its small yellow flowers appear in March and April, forming a fluffy, yellow cloud. The red, cherrylike fruits, which ripen in midsummer, can be used to make syrup and preserves, but be quick: birds love them and will eat them soon after ripening.



**13. *Syringa reticulata***

JAPANESE TREE LILAC

*Accessioned 1876*

The Japanese tree lilac has cherrylike bark and grows 25 to 30 feet in height. It extends the lilac season by flowering in mid June, after the shrub lilacs. Its blossoms are initially rose-colored, then quickly turn creamy white, emitting a soft, sweet aroma like that of privet. This tree was planted from seeds imported from Japan and is the oldest lilac in the Arboretum's collection.

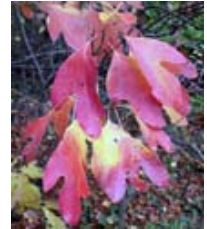


**14. *Sassafras albidum var. molle***

COMMON SASSAFRAS

*Accessioned 1884*

This tree is unusual in its three different shapes of leaves: three-lobed, to mitten-shaped, to no lobes. Early colonists believed the rootbark to be a cure for many diseases, including syphilis, and shipped large quantities back to Europe. Today, the oil from the roots and rootbark are used to make perfume, soap, and sassafras tea. The small yellow flowers that bloom in spring are not showy, but after pollination they mature into small, dark blue fruits held on brilliant red stalks. These attractive stalks are sometimes mistaken for the fruits. Sassafras is one of the best North American natives for fall color; its leaves range from yellow to deep orange to scarlet to purple.



**15. *Lindera obtusiloba var. obtusiloba***

JAPANESE SPICEBUSH

*Accessioned 1892*

The Japanese spicebush is an attractive, multistemmed shrub related to the sassafras. Like the sassafras, its leaves vary in shape, from three-lobed to mitten-shaped to no lobes. In fall, the leaves turn a golden yellow that lasts about two weeks. Its greenish yellow flowers, which emerge in spring, make up in fragrance what they lack in showiness; they are precocious, that is, they appear before the leaves. The small, round fruits turn from red to black in early fall.



**16. *Symplocos paniculata***

SAPPHIREBERRY

*Accessioned 1897*

A native of China and Japan, the sapphireberry's common name refers to its unusual, bright blue fruits, which are showier than the creamy white, fragrant flowers that bloom in June. The fruits mature in late summer to early fall, but don't expect to see them for long. Birds will quickly devour them; as such, this is a good plant for attracting birds to the garden.



**17. *Platanus x acerifolia***

LONDON PLANETREE

*Accessioned 1891*

A cross between our native sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*) and the oriental planetree (*Platanus orientalis*), the london planetree should be planted only in open areas where it will have plenty of room to reach its mature size (70 to 100 feet tall and up to 120 feet wide). The peeling bark can range from olive green to creamy white, with an overall mottled effect; some consider the bark to be the tree's most ornamental feature.



**18. *Juglans nigra***

BLACK WALNUT

*Accessioned 1893*

Native to North America, the black walnut is well known for its beautifully grained wood, which is prized in the furniture industry. In fact, this much sought-after wood is sometimes the target of poachers. Stories abound of black walnuts filched from private property by helicopters before the owners suspect foul play. It is the black walnut's cousin, the English walnut (*Juglans regia*), that produces the shelled walnuts commonly seen on grocery store shelves, but black walnuts also are edible and are used in candies and ice creams. In 1999 lightning struck this tree so forcefully that bark blew across the road. The wound looked fatal, but the tree seems to be healing.

