

# OAK RIDGE CEMETERY

## - A Spirited Stroll into the Past - 2015 Tree Trivia

Visit each of the trees, make observations, and talk with the guides to learn the answers to these questions. Find more information at <https://oakridgecemeterytrees.wordpress.com>.

### 94-02 Overcup oak (*Quercus lyrata*)

Overcup oak is native to the southeastern United States, often growing on flood plains and swamp lands. Acorns from the overcup oak have a unique adaptation. The cup, which floats, covers almost the entire acorn. How does this adaptation help the species in its native habitat?

### 94-03 Cory hybrid oak (*Quercus bicolor* × *Q. muehlenbergii* F<sub>2</sub>) (= *Quercus* × *coryana*)

A hybrid of two oak species can occur when two closely related species cross-pollinate, creating a seed with genes from both parent trees. Just like you might look more like one parent or the other, this oak tree looks more like one of its parents. Which do you think it resembles? (See the examples from your guide!)

swamp white oak, *Quercus bicolor* OR chinkapin oak, *Quercus muehlenbergii*

### 95-12 Butternut (*Juglans cinerea*)

Butternut, a close relative of black walnut, was once a common tree in Illinois. The tasty nuts are enjoyed by both humans and wildlife. What caused it to nearly disappear from our forests?

### 96-03 European pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*)

Oak trees have long been a symbol of strength and long life. The European pedunculate oak AKA English oak, ranging across most of Europe, is no exception. It was considered sacred to many of the gods of ancient mythology, its leaves have adorned the crowns of royalty for centuries, and its picture is often featured on crests, currency, and logos, both ancient and modern. Throughout Europe, a number of these ancient English oaks are protected as historic landmarks. How old do you think the oldest oaks might be?

### 96-14 Bebb hybrid oak, (*Quercus macrocarpa* × *Quercus alba*) (= *Quercus* × *bebbiana*)

The Bebb oak is one of the more common oak hybrids found in Illinois because the parents – white oak and bur oak – are two of the most common oak species. Red oak (*Quercus rubra*)

often grows alongside bur oak and white oak, but you will never see a hybrid of the Northern red oak with either of the other two. Why not?

**0-013 Canadian Hemlock** (*Tsuga canadensis*)

This tree, native to the Northeastern US and Canada, through the northern Appalachian Mountains, is one of only evergreens to have very flexible branches and a “nodding” top. What advantage does that give it in the wild?

**0-014 Ohio buckeye** (*Aesculus glabra*)

Most people will recognize the familiar seed of the buckeye tree: the smooth, brown nut said to bring good luck to its holder. When the fruit is not present, could you recognize this tree by its leaf? The leaf is “palmate,” meaning all the leaflets that make up the leaf come from a single point. Draw a buckeye leaf here:

**0-015 Wild black cherry** (*Prunus serotina*)

The wild black cherry is a very common tree in the eastern United States. It is a valuable food source for a variety of animals that rely on its fruit, leaves, and flowers. Can you think of an animal that might use each of these parts of the tree?

**0-016 Ginkgo** (*Ginkgo biloba*)

Why is the Ginkgo called a “living fossil”?

**0-017 Post oak** (*Quercus stellata*)

Where post oaks are found in their native habitats on bluffs, savannas, and sandy flatwoods, they grow very slowly and are often rather small and “scrubby”, even when they are very old. Besides genetics, what could cause of the tree’s slow growth rate and small size?

**0-018 Eastern redcedar** (*Juniperus virginiana*)

The Eastern redcedar is the only evergreen that is truly native to central Illinois. It is not hard to find, as it is a pioneer species, coming in to disturbed sites or dry, exposed areas where other trees might struggle to grow. How does the tree “travel” to these new sites?

**0-019 Sassafras** (*Sassafras albidum*)

Sassafras trees have very unique leaves that come in three basic shapes. Can you draw them here?

**0-020 American arborvitae** (*Thuja occidentalis*)

Evergreen trees are frequently planted in cemeteries as a symbolic representation of eternal life. This species is especially appropriate because of its name’s Latin meaning. What does *arborvitae* translate as?

**0-003 Cucumber magnolia** (*Magnolia acuminata*)

The cucumber magnolia is the largest and hardiest of the magnolias native to the United States, found growing primarily throughout Appalachia reaching into far southern Illinois. From what part of the plant does this tree earn its unusual name?

**0-004 bur oak** (*Quercus macrocarpa*)

Of all the oaks native to Illinois, the bur oak tends to have the thickest bark. How did this adaption help it survive life on the prairie?

**0-005 white pine** (*Pinus strobus*)

One way to identify different pine species is by counting the number of needles held together in bundles along the branch. How many needles are in each bundle on white pine?

**0-006 Osage-orange** (*Maclura pomifera*)

The Osage-orange or hedge tree is maybe best known for its “hedge apples,” the large, green fruits that drop each fall, but not every tree produces fruit. Why is this?