

15 'BUTTERFLIES' MAGNOLIA

(*Magnolia accuminata* x *M. denudata*): Eastern edge of South Common. This young tree was planted on Arbor Day in 2015. It represents the town's renewed commitment to its trees.



HONORABLE MENTIONS

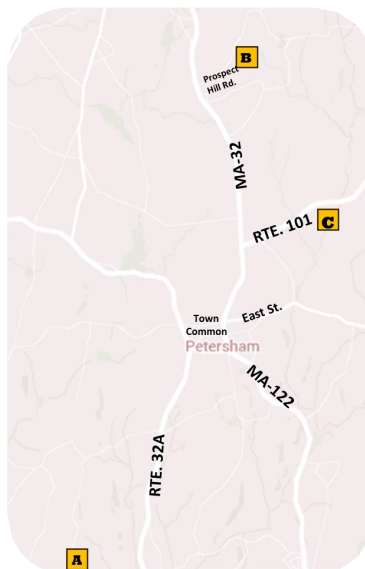
We were not able to include in our list of 15 all of the wonderful trees nominated by community members. Some require a hike; others are on private property. But they are some of the largest and oldest trees in our town.

We hope you will take the time to visit and learn from them!

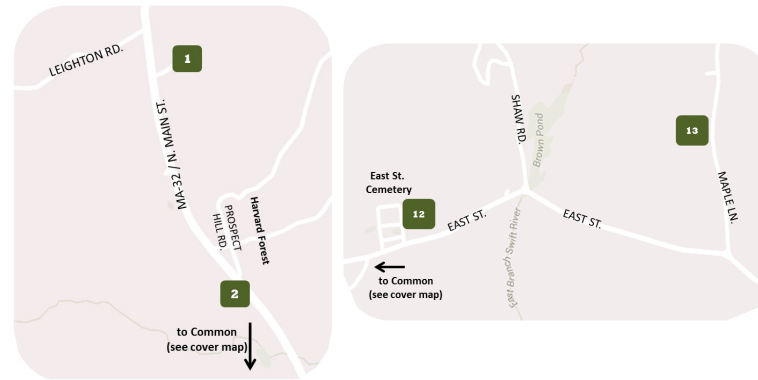
A **WHITE OAK** (*Quercus alba*): From Quabbin Gate 40, walk about 1.5 miles on Dana Road, until you reach the intersection just before the historic Dana common. Watch for the tree on the left hand side of the road. You will know it from its massive size, greyish-white alligator bark, and leaves with rounded points. White oaks grow extremely slowly; this tree is likely at least 150 years old and possibly greater than 200.

B **BLACK GUM** (*Nyssa sylvatica*): Find this tree (nominated by John Burk) after a 20 minute walk on Harvard Forest's French Road interpretive trail. On the Black Gum Swamp boardwalk, it is the large tree on your right, just beyond trail stop #17. The oldest living tree at Harvard Forest, this black gum, or tupelo, may also be the oldest living tree in Petersham. It sprouted from a seed in the year 1594!

C **SUGAR MAPLE** (*Acer saccharum*): This ancient tree lives at 90 Popple Camp Road (Rte. 101). The owners, Bob and Karen Bellefeuille, tell us it is at least 275 years old. That's easy to believe, when you see its magnificent size and shape!



INSET MAPS



THANKS

The Petersham Forest & Shade Tree Committee would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their contributions to the project:

- ◆ Petersham Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency
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- ◆ Petersham Historical Society
- ◆ Harvard Forest
- ◆ The Trustees of Reservations
- ◆ Nancy Allen, Karen & Bob Bellefeuille, John Burk, Lynn Butkovsky, Barbara Hanno, and Roy Nilson for tree nominations

We welcome your feedback!

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PETERSHAM TREE TOUR



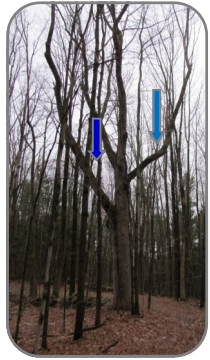
MAP

The Petersham Tree Tour highlights the science and stories of 15 trees nominated by community members.

The tour was launched in April 2016 by the Petersham Forest & Shade Tree Committee.



1 WHITE ASH (*Fraxinus americana*): Pull in to park at the green gate on Rte. 32 near utility pole #156. Walk up the short hill to the Harvard Forest trail. In the 1800s, this tree began as a sapling on a farm. The road you are standing on was the major route between Athol and Petersham. A trail sign further down the path marks the stone foundation where the former French Road Inn once stood. The photograph below was taken in the late 1800s, facing the inn and ash tree. Can you see which branches are still alive in today's tree (pictured at left), and the cavities where some branches have been lost?



Courtesy of the Petersham Historical Society

2 DAWN REDWOOD (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*): Park across the street in the main Harvard Forest lot. Please use **extreme caution** when crossing Rte. 32. Dawn redwoods are in the same family of tree as the massive redwoods and sequoias in the western U.S. They are one of the few conifer species that are not evergreen. This specimen is one of the tallest dawn redwoods in Massachusetts. It grew from a seed brought from China by the Arnold Arboretum in 1948.

3 SUGAR MAPLE (*Acer saccharum*): North Common Meadow near Brooks Law Office. Tree nominated by Barbara Hanno. Early in this tree's life, the land was a golf course for the Nichewaug Inn. Now the tree presides over a public meadow owned by The Trustees of Reservations. Notice how the trunk grows in a slightly spiraled shape. No one knows for sure why that happens in some trees, but in this case it may help the tree withstand winds that sweep across the field.

4 LONDON PLANETREE (*Platanus x acerifolia*): In front of Petersham Historical Society. This tree was planted in 1975 by Harry Buell, on the advice of Delight Haines, to commemorate the U.S. Bicentennial. Note the tree's unique bark, which is very similar to that of a related tree, the American sycamore. But planetrees are more resilient to drought, pollution, and anthracnose, making them more a successful community tree choice.

5 SUGAR MAPLE (*Acer saccharum*): In front of the Petersham Memorial Library. The older trees get, the more unique shapes they develop in their bark and branches. This remarkable old sugar maple, nearing 100 years of age, looks like it has a face in its trunk if you view it from the south side. Can you see it?

6 AMERICAN ELM (*Ulmus americana*): In front of the Center School on Spring Street. Nominated by Sheila Youd. This tree was planted in 1932 for Petersham's celebration of George Washington's 200th birthday. American elms of this size and age are becoming rare in New England. Only two remain in Petersham. The East Coast lost most of its elm trees in the mid-1900s to a disease that is still carried by the elm bark beetle today. Elm trees are renowned for the elegant, vase-like shape formed by their trunk and branches. We are fortunate to have this magnificent elm in our community today.



7 EASTERN WHITE PINE (*Pinus strobus*): In front of the Center School on Spring Street. White pine trees love sunlight. This white pine is unique for the lengths it has gone to reach the light—literally! Its lower branches stretch well beyond its trunk to capture the sun's rays (one up to almost 45 feet).

8 RED MAPLE (*Acer rubrum*): On Oliver Street – first large tree after the pond. Some trees truly live up their names. Red maples have red buds in winter, red leafstalks, twigs and flowers in spring, red seeds, and brilliant red leaves in autumn. This red maple is one of the oldest known in our town. Notice its rough, scaly bark—a sign of age in a red maple.

9 WHITE ASH (*Fraxinus americana*): On Oliver Street, between utility poles 14 & 15. This tree is one of the largest ash trees known in our town. White ash leaves turn a beautiful purple in autumn. Most baseball bats are made out of ash wood. Today, ash trees are threatened by an invasive beetle, the emerald ash borer. The beetle was first detected in Mass. in 2012, and found in Worcester County in Dec. 2015.

10 RED OAK (*Quercus rubra*): At the intersection of Oliver and East Street. This tree is an incredible ___ feet in diameter. Oaks of all sizes, but especially large ones, are valuable to humans for timber, carbon storage to combat climate change, flood protection, and air quality. They also produce thousands of acorns for birds and mammals to eat. This tree produces enough oxygen each year for 4 people to breathe. It removes hundreds of gallons of water from the ground during a rainstorm. Red oaks are the dominant tree in Petersham's forests, towering over most maples, beech, pine, and birch. You can often recognize a mature red oak by the rusty red streaks in the furrows of its bark.

11 HORSECHESTNUT (*Aesculus hippocastanum*): On East Street, across from house #21. This tree is one of only two horsechestnut trees on town property. Its large pink blossoms are spectacular in late spring. In summer, the compound leaves resemble large fans. The nut-like seeds produced in fall are an excellent food for deer and other wildlife, although they are harmful to horses. In autumn, fallen leaves leave distinct scars left on twigs that look like horseshoes.

12 EASTERN WHITE PINE (*Pinus strobus*): Along the east wall of the East Street Cemetery. As this massive tree aged, it grew around the stone wall beside it.

13 SHAGBARK HICKORY (*Carya ovata*): One of the many beautiful trees on scenic Maple Lane. Nominated by Jordan O'Connor. Shagbark hickories are unmistakable in their flaky bark, stout posture, compound leaves, and highly productive creation of nuts. Massachusetts is near the northern edge of the shagbark hickory's growing range. These hickories, which are at least 70 years old, grow along one of Petersham's most sweeping agricultural viewsheds.

14 EASTERN LARCH (*Larix laricina*): On South Main St. near utility pole #14. Larches, also known as tamaracks, are one of our most unique native trees. Like dawn redwoods, they are deciduous conifers, which means they produce needles and cones like evergreen trees, but they lose their needles in autumn, as deciduous trees do. They are commonly found in swamps and bogs. For a short time in spring, their cones are deep magenta in color.

