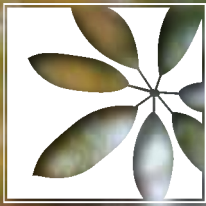


Announcing our new
Assistant Director
**Becky
Robert!**
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HYBRID

THE SCOTT ARBORETUM OF SWARTHMORE COLLEGE | Fall 2024



The 2025
Scott Arboretum calendar
is now available! / *page 2*

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Tree Preservation / *page 3*

95 Years of the
Best Cultivars:
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Claire Sawyers

We had the best Rose Celebration yet this past June! In our third year of staging this event to show off the Dean Bond Rose Garden at peak bloom, we had an impressive 563 participate on the afternoon and evening of June 6. Guests not only enjoyed the beauty of roses, but they also had the chance to try a variety of free rose-related activities for all ages. If you missed it, make a note now on your 2025 calendar for early June!



PHOTO BY: R. WARREN



PHOTO BY: R. WARREN



PHOTO BY: R. WARREN



PHOTO BY: D. MATTIS

Folks of all ages came out to enjoy the Rose Celebration on June 6.

Despite mounds of soil, heavy equipment, and yards of construction fence around the Dean Bond Rose Garden due to ongoing College construction, the beauty of the garden was indeed savored and staff members answered questions throughout the lovely evening. The first 300 guests also got to take home a free rose for their own garden. In the spirit of encouraging the cultivation of roses, we gave away *Rosa 'Beverly'* this year. This beautiful, disease resistant, pink rose from Star® Roses and Plants is especially appropriate for us to promote since the Dean Bond Rose Garden and Rose Celebrations have been made

possible by the generous bequest of Robert Pyle (Class of 1897), who was head of The Conard-Pyle Co. (now Star® Roses and Plants). This company became the country's most successful purveyor of mail-order roses and is the originator of Star® Roses.

Activities under the nearby tent included tasting samples of food and beverages made with rose petals and extracts; trying out a (temporary) rose tattoo; learning about the Philadelphia Rose Society; making rose-inspired crafts (perfect for young rose enthusiasts); and entering a raffle for the chance to win rose-themed items. The raffle was a new addition and was met with much enthusiasm.

Just outside the tent, guests lingered to listen to live music, play lawn games, and purchase dinner offerings from food trucks. A big thank you goes to the creative and hardworking staff members, the scores of volunteers who supported the event, and to all the guests who turned out for a fun and highly rewarding evening.

Additional exciting news I'm pleased to announce: As of July 1, Becky Robert is Assistant Director of the Scott Arboretum. Becky

SPECIAL NOTE

Members of the Associates of the Scott Arboretum were mailed a complimentary copy of the Scott Arboretum calendar in July.



joined the staff in September 2004 as Member and Visitor Programs Coordinator. Over the past two decades, she has successfully advanced many efforts of the Arboretum: recruiting volunteers for the Arboretum Assistants program, scheduling scores of volunteers to assist with dozens of annual events, implementing software programs to manage and train volunteers, developing our interpretive brochures and garden signs, maintaining our web page and social media content, and even becoming a videographer during the pandemic to keep the Arboretum connected to members, volunteers, and the public through newly conceived virtual programming. I'm delighted to recognize her many and talented contributions to the progress of the Scott Arboretum with this promotion. 🌹



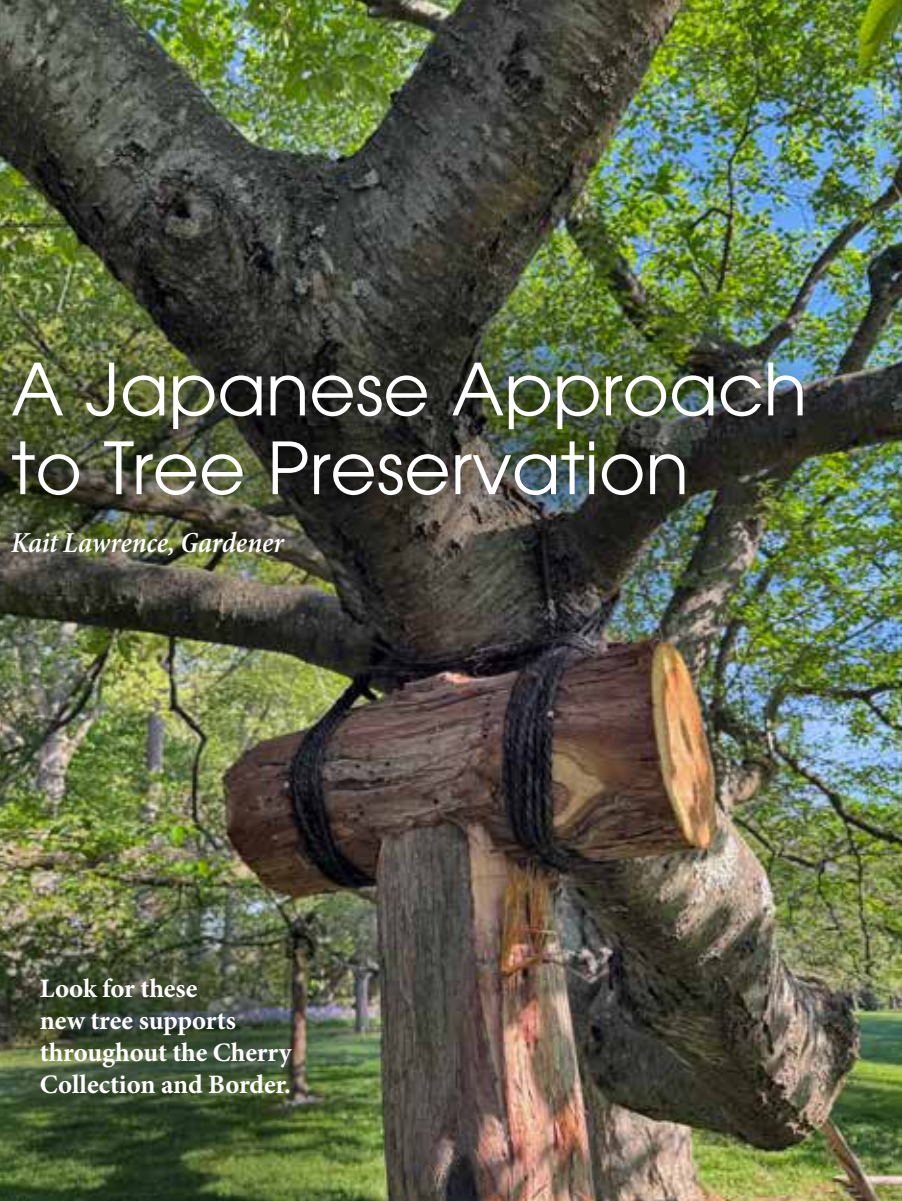
PHOTO BY: L. KESTERSON

Please help us congratulate our new Assistant Director, Becky Robert!



PHOTOS BY: K. LAWRENCE

Hoozue:



A Japanese Approach to Tree Preservation

Kait Lawrence, Gardener



Look for these new tree supports throughout the Cherry Collection and Border.


When strolling through an arboretum, one of my favorite sights to see are great, arching tree limbs that dip down to the ground, inviting adults and children alike to admire their glory. While these types of limbs are majestic to behold, in many cases, the tree is at greater risk of being wounded as a result of limb failure. Limbs can break and fail for a variety of reasons, but in this case it would be due to the weight at the end of the branches. There are many ways to prevent limb failure; here at Scott Arboretum, we have added crutches underneath the branches of some of our specimen flowering cherries.

Inspired by an indigenous Japanese arboriculture technique called “*hoozue*,” which roughly translates to “cheek cane” or “to rest one’s cheek in one’s hand,” this practice is intended to support branches vulnerable to breaking on older and/or larger specimen trees. Using this technique allows the trees to focus their energy on growing at the tips, rather than adding growth to support a large limb. American arboriculture techniques to manage this issue would have utilized invisible cabling or even the removal of these types of limbs due to their threat of failure. In the West, we focus on promoting new growth from within the canopy through heading cuts (cutting an older

stem back to a lateral branch), but Japanese arboricultural practices encourage new growth at the branch tips. This allows trees that may be decades or centuries old to continue growing as they have instead of creating large wounds, which increases the possibility of disease.

What I find so inspiring about this method is that, at the core of it, we are treating older specimen trees with respect and dignity.

Cabling is meant to be invisible to most visitors, but the tree crutches are highly visible and often within reach. Instead of hiding our interaction with our trees, we are celebrating it. Aging trees are treated like elders in Japanese arboriculture; when these trees need care, it is done in a way that is supportive of their natural form.

The crutches in the Cherry Collection and Border are made from recycled *Thuja* sp. (*arborvitae*) logs and we have chosen to keep the attractive, exfoliating bark in place. William D. Conwell and Associates, the firm who installed the crutches, also hand-dyed the rope black. Several of these crutches now support trees throughout the Cherry Collection and Border, most notably the large Yoshino cherry near the open lawn. Be sure to check out this Japanese technique for our Japanese cherries during your next visit to the Arboretum. 

What I find so inspiring about this method is that, at the core of it, we are treating older specimen trees with respect and dignity

Anemone hupehensis var. *japonica* 'Pamina' Japanese anemone

Mackenzie Knight-Fochs,
Education Programs Manager

The delicate buds and bright rose-pink blooms of *Anemone hupehensis* var. *japonica* 'Pamina' (syn. *Eriocapitella japonica* 'Pamina', Japanese anemone) belie its resilience in the garden. Dancing on wiry stems above dark green, three-lobed, mounding foliage, the masses of flowers provide a burst of color from late summer through fall, when many other perennials are starting to fade for the season.

Native to scrubs, grassy slopes, and streamsides in central and southwestern China, *Anemone hupehensis* was grown in Japanese gardens for many years. It spread outside the gardens and naturalized to such an extent that it mistakenly came to be known as a Japanese native plant. The naturally occurring variety *japonica* grows taller and has longer and narrower tepals than the species. 'Pamina' is notable for its deep pink flower color and has been awarded the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Award of Garden Merit, which recognizes plants that perform well in the garden and are reasonably resistant to pests and diseases. Specifically, Japanese anemones

are deer and rabbit resistant and do not significantly suffer from other pests or diseases.

'Pamina' is a low maintenance plant that will naturalize over time. It spreads via rhizomes and divides easily, but is

not aggressive. An individual plant will grow 2 to 3 feet tall and

wide. Japanese anemones

do best in light to

medium shade and

tolerates full sun if the

soil stays moist. Too

much shade can cause

the plants to become

leggy and more likely to

fall over. It prefers consistently

moist, humus-rich, and well drained

soils. The flowers are a dainty addition to

cut bouquets and are best planted in a border,

cottage garden, woodland garden, or grouped

together.

Japanese anemones leaf out later in the spring, so daffodils (*Narcissus* spp.), tulips (*Tulipa* spp.), and other bulbs can be layered among them. In a shaded garden, astilbe (*Astilbe* spp.),

hostas (*Hosta* spp.), autumn fern (*Dryopteris*

erythrosora), lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*), and

other foliage plants add textural interest throughout

the summer. Companion plants in sunnier locations

include Joe-Pye weed

(*Eutrochium* spp.),

cranesbill (*Geranium*

spp.), coneflower

(*Echinacea* spp.), and

burnet (*Sanguisorba* spp.).

Visit the Terry Shane Teaching

Garden and north border along Kohlberg

Hall to enjoy *Anemone hupehensis* var. *japonica* 'Pamina' in its glory this fall.



Plant Portraits

Disanthus cercidifolius Disanthus

Josh Coceano, Horticulturist

An initial glance at *Disanthus cercidifolius* (disanthus) and you might be inclined to think it is a *Cercis* sp. (redbud). Indeed, the specific epithet, *cercidifolius*, denotes its *Cercis*-like leaf shape. The leaf shape is deceiving, however, as disanthus is actually a member of *Hamamelidaceae*, the witchhazel family. When this plant family comes to mind, I think of stunning fall color and captivating, though rather unusual, flowers. Missouri Botanical Garden states *Disanthus cercidifolius* is, “an interesting and somewhat unusual shrub that is most often grown for its excellent fall color.” A quick browse through several online nurseries shows fall color as the most commonly marketed attribute.

Disanthus hails from the moist forest areas of China and Japan. It is typically encountered as a multi-stemmed shrub with slender branches that shoot 8 to 12 feet skyward and softly fan out. Given ample room, specimens can develop a pleasing fountain-like habit. Foliage can vary, but leaves cast with a blue-green hue are most commonly seen. In autumn, the heart-shaped leaves change myriad colors, including shades of orange, claret red, and purple. When the leaves overlap you can get two tones, one color on the outside and another where

they were touching. Flowering occurs in autumn. Though some references refer to the flowers as “insignificant,” they add a whimsical feeling to the garden and are a good reminder to slow down and actively observe. The tiny, star-shaped, dark purple flowers line young branches; an effect similar to twinkle lights.

Heart-shaped seed capsules follow flowering and ripen in fall of the following year.

Plant disanthus where it will receive some shade, ideally during the hottest part of the day. Its drought tolerance is low, so

plant it in moist soils with high organic matter or near water.

A specimen is planted along the flagstone path behind the Cunningham House. The site allows for a magical moment in autumn as red and purple heart-shaped leaves fall across the pathway.

‘Ena Nishiki’ is a variegated cultivar.

Growth is much slower and care must

be taken not to

site it in too

much direct

sunlight. At

the Scott Arboretum, we have had great success growing this cultivar in a large glazed container.

As you ponder which new witchhazel cultivar to add to your garden this fall, go ahead and add *Disanthus cercidifolius* to your cart. Can one have too many *Hamamelidaceae* plants? I think not!

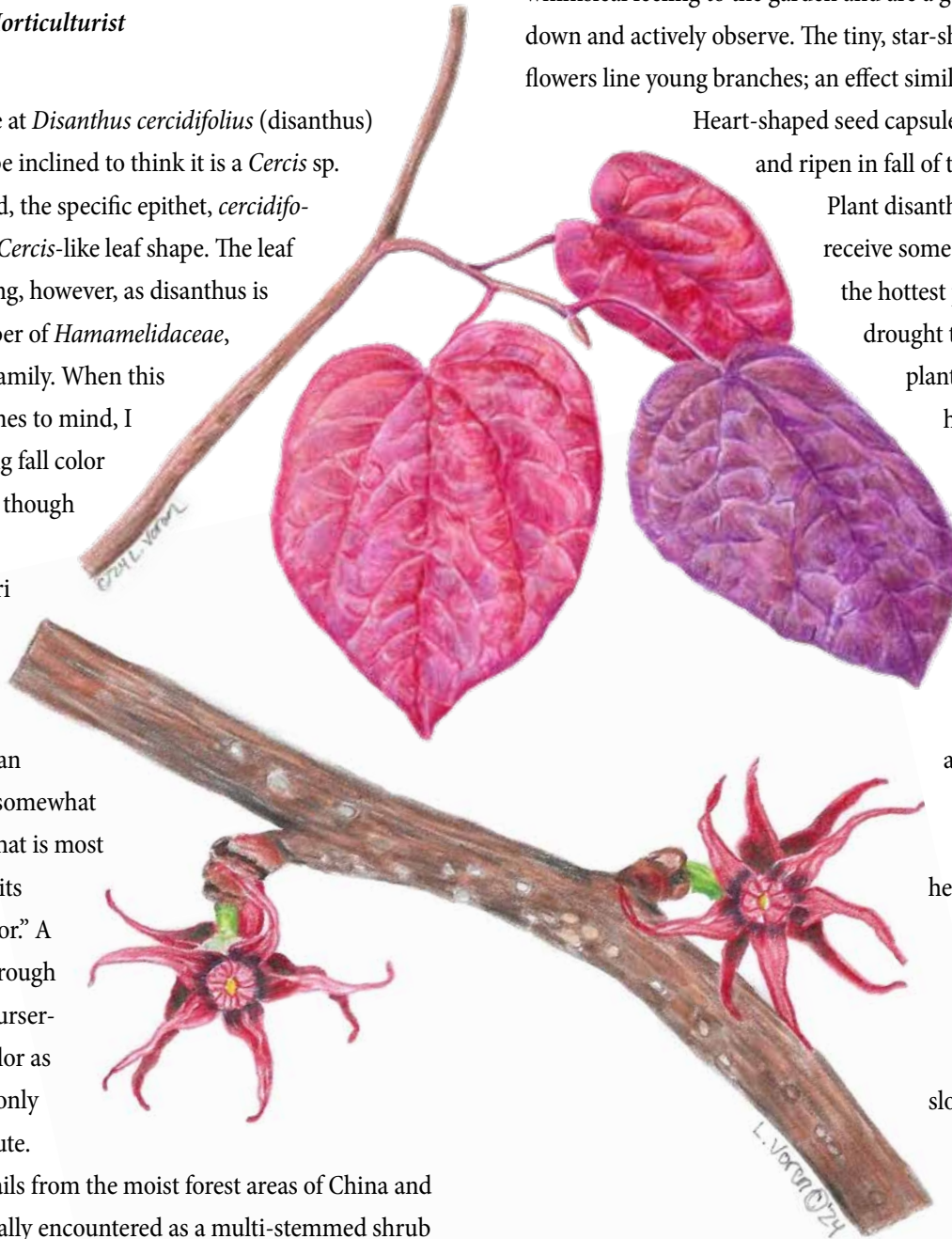




PHOTO BY: J. MCLUCAS

95 Years of the Best Cultivars: **Camellias**



Camellia japonica
'April Blush' in the
Harry Wood
Courtyard Garden.

Mackenzie Knight-Fochs, Education Programs Manager

Nestled along Chester Road in the shade of white pines and oaks is a rewarding collection of shrubs that bloom from fall to spring: camellias (*Camellia* spp.). With climate change making our region warmer and plant hybridizers breeding for cold-hardy varieties, gardeners in the Mid-Atlantic have many options of these deer-resistant, evergreen plants from which to choose. Camellias can be cultivated as shrubs or small trees and are a good alternative for cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*). The Scott Arboretum has been testing newer, cold hardy cultivars since 2011, but has grown camellias since 1987. The greatest concentration of camellias are along Chester Road, with additional specimens sited in protected areas like the Harry Wood Courtyard Garden, Terry Shane Teaching Garden, Scott Entrance Garden, behind Parrish Hall, and along the Metasequoia Allée. The American Camellia Society recognizes the Arboretum as an American Camellia Trail garden. This program connects public gardens with notable camellia collections located throughout the United States, creating the “trail.”

Camellias are native to eastern and southern Asia. They thrive in well-drained, slightly acidic soils with high organic matter and consistent and even moisture. We recommend planting camellias in

the spring to provide ample time for establishment before winter. Flowers can be white, pink, and red, with some hybrids displaying multiple colors on one plant, like *Camellia* 'April Dawn'. Three primary species are used to contribute characteristics to hybrids and cultivars:

Species	Desirable Characteristics
<i>Camellia japonica</i> (Japanese camellia)	Blooms late winter through early spring; flowers are big and ostentatious (2- to 5-inch diameter, usually double); large (3- to 4-inch), glossy foliage
<i>Camellia oleifera</i> (tea-oil camellia)	Blooms late fall through winter; cold hardiness
<i>Camellia sasanqua</i> (sasanqua camellia)	Blooms late fall through winter; smaller (2- to 3-inch diameter) flowers; smaller (1- to 3-inch) foliage

Understanding these three species' characteristics provides some insight into the parentage of some of the best cultivars grown at the Scott Arboretum:

With climate change making our region warmer and plant hybridizers breeding for cold-hardy varieties, gardeners in the Mid-Atlantic have many options of these deer-resistant, evergreen plants from which to choose.

April Series

This series of *Camellia japonica* cultivars was released by Clifford Parks of the University of North Carolina and owner of Camellia Forest Nursery. They bloom March through April, hence the series name, and are cold hardy to Zone 6. A stunning specimen of 'April Blush' greets visitors in the Harry Wood Courtyard Garden with large, shell-pink, semi-double blooms. 'April Dawn' features unique, candy-striped flowers and will occasionally produce a branch featuring a fully red flower due to the natural instability of variegation. 'April Remembered' is a popular cultivar for good reason: It is slightly larger than others in the series in all aspects and its branches become laden with cream- to pink-colored, semi-double flowers.

Camellia 'Autumn Spirit'

Also introduced by Camellia Forest Nursery, 'Autumn Spirit' is a hybrid of *C. oleifera* (Lu Shan strain) and *C. sasanqua*. The intensely pink, peony-like flowers bloom early in the fall and cover the shrub from trunk to tip. It is one of the earliest flowering fall camellias and hardy to Zone 6b. An 'Autumn Spirit' specimen grows in the Camellia Collection near Bond Memorial Hall.

Camellia japonica 'Korean Fire'

An award-winning cultivar, plantsman Barry Yinger selected 'Korean Fire' for its cold hardiness after it survived in his garden in central Pennsylvania when temperatures dropped to -23°F. Its stunning red flowers are a beautiful contrast to its lustrous, deep green foliage. It was recognized as a Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Gold Medal Plant in 2003. This award program selects plants for their ease of cultivation, multiple seasons of interest, commercial availability, appropriateness for the Mid-Atlantic region, and value to wildlife. 'Korean Fire' is grown in the Gold Medal Plants Garden around Alice Paul and David Kemp Residence Halls.

Winter Series (Ackerman Hybrids)

The cold hardiness of camellias was a limiting factor for growing them outside of the southern United States, but that changed with the Ackerman Hybrids. These cold-hardy camellias are a result of the breeding efforts of William Ackerman, a plant hybridizer at the U.S. National Arboretum. A series of very cold winters in the 1970s ravaged the camellia collection, leaving 15 of 956 specimens remaining. *Camellia oleifera* prevailed against the harsh winters and formed the basis of his hybridization efforts. William Ackerman introduced 50 species throughout his life, including the Winter Series. The Arboretum's collection includes the following Winter Series cultivars: 'Snow Flurry' (small white flower, located around The Inn



Camellia japonica 'April Dawn'



Camellia 'Autumn Spirit'



Camellia japonica 'Korean Fire'



Camellia 'Snow Flurry'



Camellia japonica 'Jerry Hill'

at Swarthmore); 'Winter's Cupid' (small white flower with pink blush at petal edges, located in the Metasequoia Allée); 'Winter's Interlude' (small pink flower, located in the Harry Wood Courtyard Garden and in the Camellia Collection); 'Winter's Joy' (bright pink semi-double flower, located in the Camellia Collection); 'Winter's Snowman' (small white flower, located in Camellia Collection); and 'Winter's Star' (large violet-pink flower, located behind Parrish Hall and around the Dan West House on Elm Avenue).

With so many exemplary varieties, it is worthwhile to add these to your visiting list for both fall and spring. 🌸

PHOTO BY: A. DEGOTHSER

PHOTO BY: J. COCEANO

PHOTO BY: M. ROSSMAN

PHOTO BY: M. ROSSMAN



PHOTOS BY: R. WARREN



HERITAGE TREE

Heritage Tree Highlight: *Fraxinus quadrangulata* Blue ash

Megan Rossman, Assistant Horticulturist

The genus of *Fraxinus* (ash), has been the subject of much discussion in recent years, as populations of ash are being decimated by the emerald ash borer, an invasive wood-boring beetle. However, a 2023 study published in the journal of *Agricultural and Forest Entomology* observed that, compared to other species of ash, especially *Fraxinus americana* (white ash), *Fraxinus quadrangulata* (blue ash) persisted much better and seems to be surviving in the aftermath of the emerald ash borer.



Native to the midwestern United States, blue ash is most noted and recognized for its square, rather than round, new stems — the specific epithet, *quadrangulata*, means ‘four-sided.’ Other attributes separating the blue ash from other members of its genus are its scaly (rather than ridged) bark, the lack of separate male and female trees, and the unique substance in its inner bark that can be extracted to create a blue dye.

This member of the *Oleaceae* (olive) family is usually found growing naturally in limestone outcroppings and therefore thrives in dryer, more alkaline soils. In a planted setting, however, it is not picky about pH or soil type. It can grow to a height of 50 to 60 feet tall with an oval to pyramidal form and has an overall slow growth rate.

Our blue ash Heritage Tree can be found on the northern side of the Mary Lyon Residence Hall along Harvard Avenue. It was added to the collection in 1997 and now measures nearly 40 feet tall. 🌿

Through the Heritage Tree Program, the Scott Arboretum is determining the most valuable specimens in our collections using quantifiable criteria to help preserve such trees into the future.

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