



WESTERLY LIBRARY
& WILCOX PARK

A Self-Guided Tour of Wilcox Park

Memorials, Monuments, Selected Trees and Gardens






Wilcox Park is a 15-acre Victorian Strolling Park & Arboretum owned and operated by the Memorial & Library Association.

The original park land was donated by Harriet Wilcox and designed by landscape architect Warren Manning in 1898.



View in Google Maps



-  RI Champion Trees
-  Formal Garden
-  Perennial Garden
-  Pollinator Garden
-  Rain Garden

Memorials & Monuments

The park grounds contain 11 memorials and monuments from various time periods. The largest memorial is the library building established in 1892 which commemorates the volunteer soldiers and sailors who fought in the Civil War.

- A **Martha Jane Crandall Urn**, *Westerly Red Granite*, 1887
- B **Westerly Library**, Longstaff & Hurd architects, 1894
- C **Westerly Women's Urn**, created 1892, featured at the *Chicago World's Columbian Exposition 1893*
- D **Hiker Memorial to the Veterans of the Spanish American War**, by *Allen G. Newman*, 1924
- E **Wilcox Memorial Fountain**, by *John Francis Paramino*, 1929
- F **World War Memorial**, by *Arthur A Shurcliff*, dedicated *Armistice Day 1937*
- G **Cristoforo Columbo Statue**, by *Charles H. Pizzano*, 1949
- H **Westerly Granite Industry Monument**, 1985
- I **Margaret Wise Brown's "The Runaway Bunny"**, by *Joan Binney Ross*, 1998
- J **Time Capsule Bench**, 2019
- K **Tarzan Brown Memorial**, by *Ted Brown*, 2023

Select/Champion Trees

Rhode Island Champion Trees:
The Rhode Island Tree Council maintains a list of the largest trees called Rhode Island Register of Big Trees. These are trees that, due to height, average crown spread and trunk circumference, are the largest of their species in RI. The Park has 7 Champions, and Westerly ranks 4th in the number of Champion trees all of which are in Wilcox Park. Champions are designated after the tree name.

- 1 **Japanese Flowering Cherry** *Prunus 'Kanzan'*. (2) Considered to be some of the showiest Japanese cherries. Has double pink blossoms in the spring. Shortest lived of all cherry trees. Provides an excellent cover of shade.
- 2 **Ginkgo** *Ginkgo biloba*. (5) One of the oldest species on earth; existing unchanged for 150 million years. Has unique fan-shaped leaves that turn bright yellow in fall. The fruit of the female produces an unpleasant odor when decomposing. Tolerates a variety of climates and extremes of soil.
- 3 **Yoshino Cherry** *Prunus × yedoensis*. (12) These Yoshino Cherries form the Friends of the Library & Wilcox Park "Cherry Allée". Grows quickly to 20 ft. and has beautiful bark and flowers.
- 4 **Tulip Poplar** *Liriodendron tulipifera*. (2) Also known as Tulip Tree. Member of the Magnolia family. One of the tallest eastern hardwoods. Unusual leaves and large flowers resemble tulips or lilies. Used by Colonial settlers to make hollowed out, single log, long lightweight canoes. Wood has many commercial uses, including furniture and musical instruments.
- 5 **Tamarack** *Larix laricina*. Known as Eastern Larch and Hackmatack. Native North American species. Needle-like leaves shed each fall. Excellent plant for moist soils at northern latitudes. Portions of root having a near right angle serve as knees in boatbuilding.
- 6 **Japanese Maple** *Acer palmatum var. dissectum*. This very old specimen displays contorted, twisted, and convoluted branches characteristic of this variety. Beautiful in the winter. The waterfall shape, cascading branches, and finely cut leaves are gorgeous in the fall.
- 7 **Weeping Higan Cherry** *Prunus subhirtella 'Pendula'*. Reaches heights of 25 to 40 ft. Long-lived for a cherry. The weeping habit mimics the falling waters of the Wilcox Memorial Fountain. Largest of all the weeping forms. Light pink flower clusters bloom in late March before foliage.
- 8 **Sweetbay Magnolia** *Magnolia virginiana*. Common throughout the coast of Southeast United States. A deciduous tree at northern latitudes and an evergreen at southern locations. Fragrant white flowers begin appearing in June.
- 9 **Weeping European Beech** *Fagus sylvatica 'Pendula'*. One of the most popular large shade trees. A favorite place for children on hot summer days. Both the American and European beeches are threatened by Beech Leaf Disease, a microscopic nematode, and are undergoing treatment.
- 10 **Flowering Dogwood** *Cornus florida 'Cherokee Brave'*. Red-flowered variety. North American native. Red fruit favored by birds. Blooms in early spring. Deep green leaves turn brilliant red, burgundy, and purple in fall.
- 11 **Umbrella Pine** *Sciadopitys verticillata*. Slow growing native of Japan. Once prevalent throughout the northern hemisphere. Fossils are frequently found in certain coal formations in Germany. The whorled foliage is most distinctive.
- 12 **Southern Magnolia** *Magnolia grandiflora 'Bracken's Brown Beauty'*. Native to southeastern United States. Does particularly well in moist wooded areas. Produces large, extremely fragrant, white blossoms in spring and adorned with deep green leaves. Can be grown as a screen or a hedge.
- 13 **Gray Birch** *Betula populifolia*. Relatively short-lived tree. Often a pioneer species in abandoned fields. Smooth bark is chalky to grayish white in color and doesn't readily exfoliate. Mature fall fruit has many tightly winged seeds. Wood is used for high grade plywood, furniture spools, and firewood.
- 14 **Oriental Spruce (RI Champion)** *Picea orientalis*. Native to Caucasus and Turkey. Dense pyramidal shaped tree tolerates infertile, gravel, or clay soils. Commercially valued for pulpwood.
- 15 **Red Horse Chestnut** *Aesculus x carnea*. Hybrid from Europe. Spectacular large rose-red flowers in May. Superior to the Common Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) in general landscape use.
- 16 **Nordmann Fir** *Abies nordmanniana*. Native to Caucasus and Asia Minor. Elegant tree not suited for small gardens due to its size. Beautiful elongated cones. Can reach heights of 200 ft. in its native habitat.
- 17 **Sourwood** *Oxydendrum arboreum*. Native to the southeastern United States. Attractive ornamental is sometimes called Sorrel or Lily of the Valley. Foliage turns red, yellow, and purple in the fall. Fragrant white flowers emerge in June and July. Sourwood honey is a favorite.
- 18 **Swiss Stone Pine (RI Champion)** *Pinus cembra*. A favorite of landscape architects. Native to the mountains of central Europe and Southeast Asia. Takes on a dense columnar quality when used as an ornamental. Likes full sun

and slightly acidic soil. Grows 40 to 70 ft. tall, with a 15 to 25 ft. wide canopy.

- 19 **Northern Catalpa** *Catalpa speciosa*. Also known as the Cigar Tree. A member of the Bignonia family. Noted for its hardiness, adaptability, and extreme resistance to rot. Often planted as a shade tree with its broad ovate leaves or as an ornamental for its large abundant bell-shaped flowers. Long slender cigar-shaped seedpods are produced every 2-3 years.
- 20 **Black Walnut** *Juglans nigra*. Also known as the American Walnut. A desirable hardwood native to the eastern United States. Its husks produce a black dye, fruit is edible, and wood is prized for furniture, gunstocks, and veneer. Produces a hormone, juglone, which inhibits the growth of certain plant species within its vicinity.
- 21 **Giant Dogwood** *Cornus controversa 'Variegata'*. Also known as Wedding Cake tree due to its tiered horizontal branching. Grows to 35-40 ft. in height. Requires full sun to part shade and produces showy milky white blooms in flattened clusters (cymes) from May to June.
- 22 **White Ash** *Fraxinus americana*. Typically reaches heights of 70 to 80 ft. Dark green compound leaves with oval-shaped leaflets. Light gray-brown bark has deep narrow ridges forming a diamond shaped pattern. Widely used for baseball bats, hockey sticks, and flooring for bowling lanes. Currently threatened by Emerald Ash Borer. Ours are inoculated with a systemic pesticide.
- 23 **Tiger Eye Pine (RI Champion)** *Pinus wallichiana*. Native to the Himalayas. Considered by some to be the most beautiful pine species. Planted in the United States as a specimen for ornamental purposes. Has lovely, yellow-banded needles. Our planting came from the United States National Arboretum, Washington, D.C.
- 24 **Dawn Redwood** *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*. Native to China. Thought to be extinct, was discovered by a botanist in 1941. In 1947 the seeds were brought to the United States by the Arnold Arboretum. Bright green needles turn orange-brown in fall. One of the fastest growing trees, growing 2-3 ft. per year under ideal conditions.
- 25 **Japanese Snowbell (RI Champion)** *Styrax japonicus*. An ornamental choice for limited space. Has dark green foliage
- in summer, turning yellow to red in fall. Pendulous clusters of bell-shaped, mildly fragrant, white flowers bloom in May-June. Flowers give way to olive-shaped drupes that remain into late autumn.
- 26 **Purple Fountain Beech** *Fagus sylvatica 'Purple Fountain'*. Elegant specimen with narrow columnar shape and weeping branches. Purple foliage fades in the summer with the hot summer sun.
- 27 **Japanese Stewartia** *Stewartia pseudocamellia*. An unusually large example. Attractive exfoliating bark, comes off in small sheets, revealing the gray, orange and red-brown of the layer below. 5-petal yellow and white flowers open in July and look like sunny-side up eggs.
- 28 **Blue Atlas Cedar** *Cedrus atlantica 'Glauca'*. Native to the Blue Atlas Mountains of northwest Africa. Closely related to the Cedar of Lebanon. The least cold tolerant of the tree cedars but can withstand the heat and dry soil better than most. Mature specimen.
- 29 **American Holly** *Ilex opaca*. Has dense pyramidal growth habit, dark green foliage, and abundant red fruit. Fruit ripens in October supporting wildlife throughout the cold season. Slow growing and the only holly that grows as a tree; all others are bushes. Mature height is 40-50 ft., and the spread is 18-40 ft.
- 30 **Giant Sequoia** *Sequoiadendron giganteum 'Glaucum'*. The most massive and one of the oldest trees on earth. Height of 160-280 ft. and diameter of 20-26 ft. Can live up to 3,500 years. Native to the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California. Member of the cypress family. Displays the characteristic reddish-brown bark.
- 31 **Japanese Maple** *Acer palmatum*. (4) Displays only a handful of the genetic diversity that Japanese Maples possess. Has fine bark, sculptural limbs, and delicate 5 to 9 point leaves. Two general categories exist with a distinct difference in form of either upright or cascading branches; these four specimens are upright.
- 32 **Sweet Birch** *Betula lenta*. Also known as Black or Cherry Birch. Planted in 2002, our specimen will reach a height of 50-80 ft. Prefers a cool moist climate. Can be found from Maine to Alabama
- and at higher altitudes of 2,000-3,000 ft. in the southern Appalachians. Trees can be tapped in early spring for sap to be made into birch beer.
- 33 **Trifoliolate Orange** *Poncirus trifoliata*. Closely related to true citrus trees but is hardy to -10°F. Often has multiple branches with a tangled crown of 2"-long thorns. Pleasantly fragrant fruit, is full of seeds and very sour.
- 34 **Lawson's Cypress** *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*. Also known as Port Orford Cedar or Oregon Cedar. Native to southwestern Oregon and northwest California. Thrives in cool, moist, well-drained soil with plenty of sun. Bark varies from reddish to silvery brown. Lumber is valued for planking by traditional wooden boat builders.
- 35 **Paper Birch** *Betula papyrifera*. Also known as Canoe Birch. Our 3-leader specimen is approaching maturity. Wood has many special uses including toothpicks, clothespins, and ice cream sticks as well as toys and pulpwood. Native Americans stretched the bark over frames of Northern White Cedar for canoes.
- 36 **Green Ash (RI Champion)** *Fraxinus pennsylvanica*. Fast growing. Reaches mature height of 50 - 80 ft. with a spreading canopy half the height. Adaptable to a variety of settings. Smooth bark colored gray-brown. Bright green leaves turn lemon yellow in fall. Wood has similar uses as White Ash. Threatened by the Emerald Ash Borer.
- 37 **Black Oak** *Quercus velutina*. Found throughout the eastern United States. Member of the Red Oak subgenera. Wood has many applications, including casks for dry goods and decking for New England covered bridges.
- 38 **White Oak** *Quercus alba*. Classic eastern oak is the oldest tree in the park at over 300 years with a lifespan of up to 700 years. Typically has a canopy much wider than height. Used extensively in shipbuilding and in cooperages. Was favored for constructing tight casks for liquids.
- 39 **Bald Cypress** *Taxodium distichum*. Member of the Redwood family. A deciduous tree that sheds its needle-like foliage in winter. Native habitat is wet, swampy soil of the southeastern United States and Gulf coast, although adaptable to a variety of soil types. The heartwood is very resistant to decay.

Used for docks and bridges as well as general millwork.

40 Swamp White Oak *Quercus bicolor*. The species name “bicolor” means two-colored and refers to the leaves being dark shiny-green above and silvery-white beneath with 5-10 rounded lobes. Mature specimen. Has one of the largest canopies in the park spanning ~90 ft. Its 45 in. diameter trunk places it at the upper size limit for this species.

41 Littleleaf Linden *Tilia cordata*. A member of the Basswood family, this is a cool climate shade and street tree. The abundant flowers often attract bees. This species is bothered by Japanese beetles and aphids.

42 Honeylocust *Gleditsia triacanthos*. Popular in the East and Midwest for shade and attracting wildlife. Hardy and highly salt tolerant. Often planted along roadways in snow regions of the United States.

43 London Planetree *Platanus x acerifolia*. Widely planted in the city of London. One of the few species to survive the coal-polluted air of the Industrial Revolution era. Tolerant of a wide variety of soil types.

44 American Elm *Ulmus americana*. Native to eastern North America. Extremely hardy. Thrives in a variety of habitats. Leaves serve as food for butterfly and moth larvae. Wood is used for baskets, furniture, hockey sticks, and paper. This specimen was resistant to Dutch elm disease. New cultivars are also resistant.

45 Pin Oak (2nd largest in RI) *Quercus palustris*. A member of the Red Oak subgenera, this is the most commonly planted shade and street tree in the United States. The lower branches hang down; upper branches ascend. Unlike other oaks, the Pin Oak’s trunk is continuous from root to crown.

46 Alaska Cedar *Xanthocyparis nootkatensis*. Also known as Nootka Cypress and Yellow Cypress. Native to western North America from Alaska to northern Oregon. An attractive specimen favoring moist habitats.

47 Nikko Fir *Abies homolepis*. Native to the Honshu and Shikoku regions of Japan. Noted for its beautiful cones. Of the firs, this species is the most tolerant of urban conditions and pollution.

48 Himalayan Birch *Betula utilis* var. *jacquemonti*. Native to the Himalayas.

Prized for its brilliant white bark. Vigorous and fast growing. Has an open pyramidal habit with graceful and delicate branching.

49 Chestnut Oak (2nd largest in RI) *Quercus prinus*. A member of the White Oak subgenera. Foliage resembles the American Chestnut. Bark has a high tannin content and used in the tanning process. Wood is marketed as White Oak. This specimen has impressive height of over 100 ft.

50 European Cutleaf Beech *Fagus sylvatica* ‘*Laciniata*’. Large attractive ornamental with excellent fall color and deeply serrated lance-shaped leaves. Often mistaken for the ‘*Asplenifolia*’ cultivar. Considerable variation in degree of serration occurs in any particular tree.

51 Sweetgum *Liquidambar styraciflua*. From southwest Connecticut to central Florida and eastern Texas. Often a pioneer tree. A hardwood valued in the furniture industry. During the 18th and 19th centuries gum resin was used for medicinal purposes and to make chewing gum. Star-shaped leaves.

52 Maackia *Maackia amurensis*. Native range from Russia to eastern Asia. Small deciduous shade tree reaching heights and spread of 20-30 ft. Fragrant white pea-like flowers appear in late spring, followed by flat seed pods 2-3 in. long. Coppery-bronze bark exfoliates on mature trees.

53 Northern Red Oak *Quercus rubra*. The northernmost eastern oak. Range is from Nova Scotia south to Georgia and west to Minnesota. One of the most rapidly growing oaks. Lumber used for flooring, furniture, fence posts, pilings, and slack casks (for dry products such as apples, nails, and flour).

54 Bur Oak (RI Champion) *Quercus macrocarpa*. Known as the Mossy Oak. Member of the White Oak subgenera. Has the largest acorns of any native oak and leaves approaching one foot in width. Difficult to transplant. Seldom used commercially.

55 Japanese Larch *Larix kaempferi*. Closely related to the European Larch. Native of Honshu, Japan. Widely cultivated in Britain as it is faster growing and more disease resistant than the European Larch.

56 Sugar Maple *Acer saccharum*. Also known as Rock Maple. A leading furniture wood. Some trees develop

unusual and valuable grain patterns such as birdseye. Boiled sap is the source of maple syrup, a use colonists learned from the Native Americans. 32 gal. of sap make about 1 gal. of maple syrup.

57 Sycamore Maple (RI Champion) *Acer pseudoplatanus*. (2) Also known as the Planetree Maple. Native of Europe and west Asia. Hardy in exposed areas and tolerant of salt spray. Lacks the bold fall color associated with other maples. Flaking bark is similar to a mature American Sycamore.

58 Cedar of Lebanon *Cedrus libani*. Native to Turkey and Lebanon. An evergreen conifer. Ages to have a massive trunk, a flattened top, and broad spreading horizontal branching. Best winter hardiness of the true cedars.

59 Espresso Kentucky Coffee Tree *Gymnocladus dioica* ‘*Espresso*’. A sterile grafted male and seedless cultivar. Native range is central and eastern United States to Ontario and Quebec. Tall dioecious (separate male and female trees), deciduous tree with scaly gray-brown bark and large doubly-compound leaves. Provides welcome shade in the summer. Leafs out in late spring. Drops its radiant yellow leaves in early fall.

60 Black Gum *Nyssa sylvatica*. Commonly called sour gum or black tupelo. Low maintenance, slow-growing, stately shade tree. Native to eastern North America. Prefers moist soil and full sun. Long taproot precludes moving established trees. Small greenish-white flowers bloom from May to June. An excellent nectar source for bees. Fall leaf color is a spectacular crimson red. Primarily dioecious (separate male and female trees) where female trees need a male pollinator to set fruit.

In early 2025, Wilcox Park received designation as a Level II Arboretum from the ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program.

