

The Wonderful, Welcoming Trees of Glencarlyn

Healthy Trees, Healthy Neighborhood

Glencarlyn is home to many native and non-native trees. Our generous tree canopy provides habitat and food for birds and other wildlife, cooling shade for humans, and energy and climate benefits for our planet. It adds beauty to our neighborhood and value to our properties.

To highlight the impressive diversity of our trees, the Glencarlyn Tree Committee has prepared three short, self-guided tours of neighborhood trees, as shown on the map below. The trees on each tour are numbered and have accompanying descriptions on the following pages highlighting notable characteristics. The Tree Stewards of Arlington and Alexandria helped us identify and select the trees.

This is just the beginning. We also plan to identify trees in the section of Glencarlyn located west of Carlin Springs Road, which boasts a large oak tree on the east side of Carlin Springs Elementary School that has been designated a Notable Tree by Arlington County. Also, coming soon will be an interactive version, designed for mobile devices. We welcome feedback and suggestions as we expand and refine the tree tour guides.

Tree Tour Guidelines

1. View the trees from the sidewalk or street. Please respect private property.
2. Do not touch or disturb the trees.
3. Be mindful of health and safety guidelines as you walk the neighborhood.

Expanding Glencarlyn's Tree Canopy

We hope the tour sparks greater appreciation of the beauty and natural value our trees bring to Glencarlyn, and that this might inspire you to protect existing trees and plant additional trees in your yards. Arlington County offers numerous resources in this regard, such as the Tree Canopy Fund, which provides large and small trees *at no cost* to Arlington residents. Information about this program can be found at: <https://parks.arlingtonva.us/grants-to-plant-or-maintain-trees-on-private-property/>.

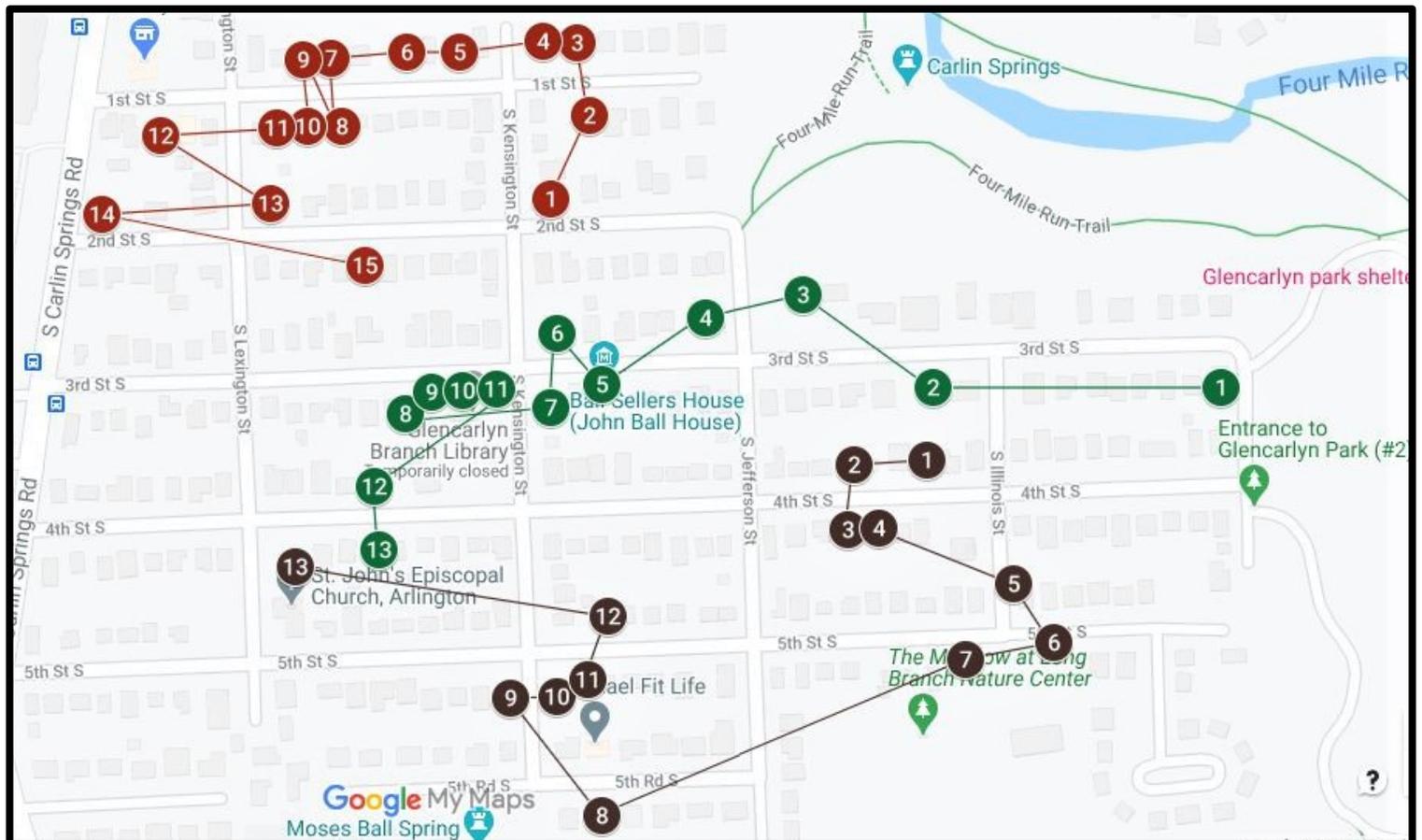
About Us

The Glencarlyn Tree Committee seeks to promote greater tree awareness, with a goal of protecting and expanding our neighborhood tree canopy. Current members are Stuart and Nancy Davis, Steve LeSueur, Kathy Reeder, Susan Walsh and Steve Young.

Additional Resources

Go to Glencarlyn.org for an online copy of the tour below. An interactive version for mobile devices will soon be available there as well.

THREE GLENCARLYN TREE TOURS MAP (North, Central, South)



GLENCARLYN NORTH TOUR

Glossary:

Bract - modified leaf that is part of a flower

Conifer - cone bearing, usually evergreen

Cultivar - cultivated variety

Deciduous - sheds leaves in fall

Evergreen - retains leaves throughout the year

1N. Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*)

115 S. Kensington St. This deciduous tree is native in our area. It has distinctive pointed, narrow leaves without the usual lobes, similar to willow leaves, thus its name. They grow fairly fast, do well in urban/suburban environments, and are popular street trees. Acorns are produced in many years, sometimes abundantly, and are about the size of a little fingertip. Squirrels and blue jays often move the acorns, helping new trees spring up in yards and pots. When small, these “volunteer” trees can be transplanted to an appropriate location. This individual is a nice specimen of a large street-side willow oak. If you examine its lower trunk, you may notice a slight spiral buttressing that probably helps to strengthen the tree.

2N. Nelly Stevens Holly (*Ilex 'Nellie R. Stevens'*)

5616 1st St. S. This broadleaf evergreen, a hybrid of two hollies, stands as a tall, dense cone with lustrous, dark green leaves. It grows quickly, up to 3' a year, to 25-35' in height and 10-12' in width. It is heat and pollution tolerant and could be planted as a hedge or a stand-alone. Its small, white, spring flowers produce vivid red berry-like fruits (if properly pollinated). It is not native to North America.

3N. American Hemlock (*Tsuga Canadensis*)

5623 1st St. S. Native to the eastern U.S. and a member of the pine family, this shade tolerant evergreen keeps its foliage all year. A long-lived tree, its straight trunk with brownish bark reaches 100-170' in height, with a conic crown. Hanging, widely spaced branches with fine, dark-green needles give the tree a soft, delicate feel. Abundant small brown cones decorate the branches.

4N. Eastern Redcedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)

5629 1st St. S. Misnamed “red cedar,” this ancient, long-lived juniper species is native to the eastern U.S. and quite common. Its wood was once used for Colonial furniture and fences and later for pencils. Its dense pyramidal shape, with a height of 40-50', makes it an excellent windbreak or screen. The evergreen, lacy foliage bears bluish grey berries loved by birds. The female tree sports green flowers and the berries; the male's flowers are yellow, with small, brown cones. It likes full sun and is tolerant of most soils, heat, cold, wind, and drought.

5N. Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)

5707 1st St. S. This is one of the most common and abundant trees in eastern North America. Growing moderately fast in a year, it stretches 40-60' tall with a 40' spread when mature. It grows well in full sun and in acidic, moist, sandy, and clay soil. The red maple is well-named because it brings color year-round: red leaves in winter, red-tinged greening leaves in spring, red flowers, and yellow to red autumn leaves. The samaras or fruits feed squirrels and rodents while deer and rabbits eat the tender shoots and leaves.

6N. Southern Red Oak (*Quercus falcata*)

5717 1st St. S. One of many oaks native here, this deciduous tree is not as common in Glencarlyn as, for example, white oaks. As with many oaks, the leaf shape is fairly distinctive. This particular specimen is growing at a noticeable angle, perhaps due to a storm that began to topple it many years ago, but it looks healthy. The yard of this house has one of our nicest stands of large oak trees, but just one of this species.

7N. Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)

5725 1st St. S. This moderate growth understory tree, native to the eastern U.S., greets spring with magenta-pink flower clusters before its leaves appear. The green, papery, heart-shaped leaves are eaten by caterpillars and moths. Needing full to partial sun, it grows 20-30' tall with a graceful crown and irregular branching. Brownish pods of 2-3" stay through the winter. Native Americans ate the redbud flowers raw or boiled.

8N. Wild Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*)

5726 1st St. S. A deciduous fruit tree native in our area, the wild black cherry is one of the most common fruiting trees in our parks. Cherry wood is a popular furniture wood and also makes good, long-burning firewood. You may notice the hanging white flower clusters in the spring. Birds love the somewhat sour cherries and help to spread the tree.

9N. Deciduous Magnolia, possibly Saucer Magnolia (*Magnolia x soulangeana*)

5729 1st St. S. Difficult to confirm without flowers, this tree might be the deciduous, non-native hybrid saucer magnolia, a cross between two other species. Magnolias can be evergreen or deciduous depending on where they grow. An ancient plant native to the northern hemisphere, the large white-to-pink, lightly scented flowers blossom in spring on bare stems before the large, leathery leaves unfurl. The leaves drop in winter, revealing large silvery buds. Deciduous magnolias are more hardy and cold-resistant than evergreen magnolias and may reach 30' in height.

10N. Eastern White Pine (*Pinus strobus*)

5730 1st St. S. This evergreen tree is native to our area, although this small-to-medium-sized specimen probably was planted. These pines have groups of five 3-5" long needles and can form large, 4-7" cones. The soft wood makes this pine popular for lumber use. These pines may not do well in our acidic, clay soil.

11N. Post Oak (*Quercus stellata*)

5730 1st St. S. A deciduous tree native in our area, the post oak has distinctive leaves that look a little squared-off. It is noted for its twisty branch structure in older trees. The post oak is a member of the white oak group. The acorns are popular with wildlife. This tree does not display notable fall color.

12N. Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*)

5810 1st St. S. The most distinctive feature of this eastern U.S. species is its branches, which spread vertically at the top and horizontally in the middle, and droop gracefully down at the bottom. Moderately fast growing, it matures to a height of 80'. It prefers full sun and plenty of water in summer. Its lustrous green leaves have deep, pointed lobes that become reddish bronze in autumn. It has a shallow root system. The small, slender twigs or “pins” were once used in wooden building construction.

13N. Persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*)

109 S. Lexington St. A fruit tree native to our area, this large persimmon is a designated Arlington Notable Tree. Persimmons can produce large numbers of plum-sized fruit that start out green and turn as they ripen. The old saying was that they should not be eaten until after a cold freeze, when they can become sweet and tasty. Persimmons are dioecious, meaning that individual trees are either male or female, and we think this one is male and therefore non-fruiting. The blocky bark pattern observable on this tree is a unique aspect of persimmons.

14N. Butternut (*Juglans cinerea*)

Vacant lot west of 5809 2nd St. S. A nut-bearing relative of the walnut, this deciduous tree is native in our area. Glencarlyn is at the very southern range of this tree that likes cooler climates. Native Americans made oil from the nuts, which also are popular with wildlife. A group of three butternuts stands on this vacant lot; the largest tree is closest to S. Carlin Springs Rd. near the corner of 2nd St. S.

15N. Honey Locust (*Gleditsia tricanthos*)

5720 2nd St. S. A deciduous tree native to midwestern North America, this Glencarlyn tree is outside its natural range so must have been planted. Honey locusts have distinctive fern-like leaves that turn yellow in the fall. Some have large thorns that grow from the trunk but this one is a thorn-less cultivar.

GLENCARLYN CENTRAL TOUR

Glossary:

Bract - modified leaf that is part of a flower

Conifer - cone bearing, usually evergreen

Cultivar - cultivated variety

Deciduous - sheds leaves in fall

Evergreen - retains leaves throughout the year

1C. Pignut Hickory (*Carya glabra*)

300 S. Harrison St. at foot of 3rd St. S.

Common in eastern oak-hickory forests--and sometimes stretching up 100 feet--pignut hickories are so-named because the distinctive nuts feed wildlife. Farmers fatten their stock on them. The 8-12" leaves form generous oval canopies for shade and the strong branches resist breakage in storms.

2C. Loblolly Pine (*Pinus taeda*)

5506 3rd St. S. Loblolly pine is usually 50- 80' tall but can reach over 150'. This fast-growing pine is pyramidal when young, ideal for screening, but loses its lower limbs as it grows into a stately windbreaker or shade tree. In winter, the 6- 9" evergreen needles turn light green to brown. The often-paired cones are red/brown and have very sharp spines. The thick bark helps make this tree very resistant to fire.

3C. Southern Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*)

5527 3rd St. S. Although native only to seven of the most southern states, this symbol of the South—the state tree of Mississippi—grows well when planted by Northern Virginians who have the space to enjoy its graceful spread. Showy, fragrant, 6-8" flowers with waxy white petals bloom in late spring, with a few latecomers emerging in fall. Fuzzy brown cones come next, ripening to offer bright red seeds to wildlife. When mature, the trees can reach 80 feet.

4C. Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*)

5601 3rd St. S. Our neighborhood boasts at least four of these rare trees, gifts of William R. Van Dersal, a botanist who lived at 6 S. Kensington St. On his travels, he brought back seedlings to share with other Glencarlynites, says resident Mary Benn. The seedling of this tree was planted by her husband, John D. Benn, in the mid-1960s. Fossils show the dawn redwood existed before living plants were discovered in China. It even has a stone-age appearance: a rosy orange-brown trunk with fluted bark thickens to huge root flares. Deciduous, feathery yellow-green compound leaves hang from graceful branches that yield tiny four-sided cones in late fall.

5C. American Elm (*Ulmus americana*)

5620 3rd St. S. (behind the Ball-Sellers House). American elm's height of 75-100' and vase-like shape offered a uniquely graceful tree for planting along city streets, with benefits of cleaner air and cooler temperatures. Dutch elm disease entered America on European shipments of unpeeled logs in 1930. Over half the species was wiped out by 1976, with many more lost since then. Elms remain healthy with triennial injections, and disease-resistant cultivars are being developed to increase American elm's long-term recovery as a canopy tree.

6C. Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*)

5627 3rd St. S. (Gen. Burdett House). This non-native species remains a popular street tree because it tolerates most soil--even compacted and alkaline soil--and grows slowly to 75' or more. The tree has fan-shaped leaves with vivid yellow fall color. Both male and female trees are needed for reproduction. Females produce lots of fruit, famous for notoriously stinky seeds that litter the ground.

7C. Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*)

301 S. Kensington St. (Eastlawn, also called Stetson House). Often recommended as a street tree because of its straight trunk and pyramid shape, pin oaks prove durable and long-lasting, even in dense urban areas. The shiny leaves have bristle tips and deep sinuses. They turn red to bronze come fall, shedding half-inch acorns. The leaves stay on the tree well into winter.

8C. Green Ash, (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*)

300 S. Kensington St. (library, in garden). Centerpiece of the Glencarlyn Library garden, this ash proves a rare find because the ranks of this North American native, which grows throughout the eastern U.S., have been decimated by the emerald ash borer. The U.S.D.A. reports that borers have killed tens of millions of ash trees in 30 states. To try to save remaining ashes, arborists apply insecticide periodically. The medium-sized trees stretch to 70' and tolerate a range of environments.

9C. Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)

300 S. Kensington St., (library, 3rd St. side near garden walkway; sign behind tree). Red maple is an abundant species in eastern forests, reproducing aggressively by seeds and sprouting after fire and logging. This "supergeneralist," grows on the widest variety of sites and greatest range of conditions of any North American species. It will probably continue to increase in dominance in the overstory during the next century, replacing the historically dominant trees. Leaves have 2-4" long maple-leaf shapes with toothed edges. Scarlet fall leaves give the tree a stunning appearance.

10C. Red Buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*)

300 S. Kensington St. (library, 3rd St. side, to left of 9C.; sign behind tree).

The 4-6" long, coarse, bright green, hand-shaped leaves have an unpleasant odor when crushed. The fragrance serves as a warning sign for this plant since all parts of it are poisonous. One of the first trees to shed its leaves in autumn, red buckeye puts on a vivid display of bright orange and yellow fall foliage. The spring flowers are also quite showy, the erect, yellow/green, 6" high flower clusters decorating the branches.

11C. Bald Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*)

300 S. Kensington St., (library, 3rd St. side, to left of 10C.; sign in front of tree).

Bald cypress is a large, slow-growing but long-lived, deciduous conifer, which frequently reaches 100- 120'. Its trunk is massive, tapered and buttressed. The leaves are alternate, linear, and flat, with blades generally spreading around the twig. The bark is thin and fibrous with an interwoven pattern of narrow flat ridges and narrow furrows. Riverine swamps of bald cypress reduce damage from floods and act as sediment and pollution traps as they cause floodwaters to slow down and infiltrate the soil.

12C. Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*)

5723 4th St. S. (in back yard, overhangs fence with Carlin Hall).

Willow oaks grow to over 100' tall, with a trunk 3- 6' in diameter. It has thick, smooth, light-reddish bark when young, which becomes roughened and divided into narrow ridges. The leaves are simple, alternate, deciduous, elongated, and slender, with smooth edges. They are light green and shiny above, dull and paler below, with distinct venation. Natural regeneration is principally through sprouts from stumps. Willow oaks may also be established by planting acorns.

13C. Southern Red Oak (*Quercus falcata*)

5722 4th St. S. Southern red oak is a durable shade tree reaching 60- 80' with a large rounded canopy. Its straight trunk is adorned with well-spaced branches. The shiny leaves are 5- 9" long with long terminal lobes. Leaves turn brown over an extended period into winter. The dark brown to black bark is ridged and furrowed. It is one of the most productive trees for feeding wildlife, with particularly tasty acorns. Red oaks can live over 200 years.

GLENCARLYN SOUTH TOUR

1S. American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*)

5509 4th St. S. This massive tree can slowly grow 120' high and 50' wide. Its low branches with attractive glossy leaves provide dense shade. In fall, leaves turn bronze before weathering to light tan. Bark on older trees resembles elephant skin. The tiny nuts are much prized by birds and various mammals. The nearly white wood is used in toys, cookware, furniture and beer barrels. The wood was used to make wheels for Colonial mills. Beech trees can live 400 years.

2S. Black Maple (*Acer nigrum*)

5521 4th St. S. Black maple grows in a variety of soils, but most commonly on moist soils of river bottoms in mixed hardwood forests. It grows rapidly in early life, then slowly, and may live 200 years. Black maple is cut and sold with sugar maple as hard lumber. The trees can be tapped for sap for maple syrup. Young trees are often browsed by deer, and buds and seeds are eaten by birds. This tree is often prized for its ornamental value.

3S. Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*)

5520 4th St. S. Recognized as the Virginia state tree and state flower, the flowering dogwood can grow to 20- 35' tall and spread 25- 30'. Cultivar bracts surrounding the flowers may be pink or red, but the species color is white. The fall color depends on site and seed source but on most sun-grown plants will be red to maroon. The bright red fruits are often eaten by birds.

4S. Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*)

5516 4th St. S. (Mitchell House). Standing tall in front of a historic 1888 farmhouse, this noble hardwood will be preserved when the block gets new curbs and gutters next year. The most common east coast maple species grows slowly but soars 60-80'. The traditional maple syrup provider remains popular for its bright orange fall foliage. It shelters many birds and other wildlife.

5S. White Oak (*Quercus Alba*)

415 S. Illinois St. This stately native tree is thought to be over 100 years old. White oaks can reach 100' in height and several feet in diameter, with wide, rounded crowns. The leaves are 4-7" long and have 7-10 rounded lobes similar in size and shape. Many caterpillars feed on them. The oblong acorns are ¾" long, with a bumpy covering, and are popular with a variety of wildlife. The hard, close-grained wood is used for lumber, furniture, and flooring. Highly watertight, it is also used for whiskey and wine barrels.

6S. Chestnut Oak (*Quercus montana*)

5432 5th S. S. (middle tree of three small trees at fence).

Native to North America, the chestnut oak grows rapidly, reaching 50-60' in height, with an equal spread when grown in the open. It is a member of the white oak group, with chestnut-like leaves, and can survive on steep rocky sites. It has 1.5" acorns with teacup-shaped caps. These large, sweet acorns ripen in the fall and are eaten by many forms of wildlife. The bark was formerly used for tanning leather. The national champion chestnut oak stands 144' tall in Tennessee's Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

7S. Deodar Cedar (*Cedrus deodara*)

5500 5th St. S. "Deodar" derives from a Sanskrit term meaning "wood of the gods." This evergreen's native range is the Himalayan Mountains from Afghanistan to Nepal. It was planted at this historic (built in 1888) Glencarlyn home during the 1940s, based on old photos. The large sweeping branches give the tree a graceful appearance. It can reach 80' tall in landscape settings. The male cones are 2-3" long and the distinctive female cones are 3-4" long and 3" across, with green/purple scales that turn red/brown at maturity. New needle shoots arch somewhat downward, distinguishing the Deodar from similar species.

8S. Thunderhead Japanese Black Pine

(*Pinus thunbergii* 'Thunderhead')

5616 5th Rd. S. Thunderhead pine is a shrub-like, compact form of the Japanese Black Pine, which is native to the coastal areas of Japan and South Korea. It was purchased by the current owner from a local nursery ten years ago. This evergreen grows from 20-50' in height and its dense, dark-green needles provide good screening. The upright, white, candle-like buds provide an interesting contrast with the foliage. It grows in an irregular and asymmetrical form, has a spreading crown with drooping branches and is sometimes pruned into interesting shapes.

9S. Northern or Common Catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa* or *Catalpa bignonioides*)

500 S. Kensington St. The Northern Catalpa and Common Catalpa, both native American species, are difficult to tell apart. Each has heart-shaped leaves, showy white flowers with yellow and purple spots on the inside, and distinctive bean-like fruit capsules 8-20" long. The Northern Catalpa is known as Cigar Tree and the Common Catalpa as Indian-Bean. Catalpas usually grow to a height of 30-50' and have a lifespan of about 60 years. Based on their placement on either side of the front walk and driveway, these trees may have been planted when the house was built in 1955.

10S. Virginia Pine (*Pinus virginiana*)

5630 5th St. S. (Kensington St. side, last tree on right).

This North American native evergreen is 50-80' in height and has a ragged, flat-topped crown. As lower branches die, stubs of branches often remain for many years. Its twisted needles are yellow-green and 1.5-3" long. The egg-shaped cones are 1.5-3.75" long with sharp spines. Small songbirds eat the seeds and may roost in young, thick stands; wood-peckers nest in decayed trees; and mice and deer browse young foliage. Also known as scrub pine, this tree adapts to most soil conditions, making it suitable for strip-mine reclamation.

11S. Purple Leaf Redbud (*Cercis canadensis* 'Forest Pansy')

5626 5th St. S. The current owners planted this tree about 15 years ago to add color and variety to their yard. Forest pansy is a cultivar of the eastern redbud, which is native to eastern and central North America. Usually 20-30' tall, it has a vase-like shape. The leaves have red twigs and beautiful, purplish new leaves, which fade somewhat in summer. Small purple/pink flowers bloom in early spring in clusters along the branches before leaves appear. This is followed by bean-like seedpods up to 4" long that mature in summer. The nectar attracts hummingbirds; the tree is resistant to damage by deer.

12S. Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*)

5621 5th St. S. This young, North American native tree came from Arlington County's annual Arbor Day free trees program. Sycamores are massive trees that grow rapidly, reaching 75-90' in height with a 3-4' trunk diameter, the largest diameter of any North American hardwood. The fruit ball is packed with ½" seeds surrounded by fine hairs and in winter resembles a Christmas tree ornament. The distinctive "camouflage" bark is mottled brown, green, tan, and white, and peels readily. Songbirds eat the seeds and wildlife establish roosts and dens in old, hollow trees. The wood is moderately strong, with uses such as chopping blocks, furniture, and particleboard.

13S. Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)

415 S. Lexington St. (St. John's Episcopal Church). Neighbors linger under this tree on the church lawn when they go walking and children collect the spiky fruit. Named for sap oozing from wounds in the trunk, it grows to 80' with an oval crown. Sweetgum's star-shaped leaves can be found throughout the U.S south. They turn bright red, purple, yellow or orange in fall and early winter.