

Tree of the Year: American Holly
(Ilex opaca)

There are hundreds of species of holly, found on every continent except Antarctica. American holly is native across eastern North America, but is primarily a plant of the humid Southeast. In the wild, it is a common understory tree in pine or oak forests on a wide variety of soils. In cities, it's used as a symmetrical evergreen landscape accent.

Male and female flowers appear on separate trees, so trees of both genders must be in the same neighborhood to ensure berries on female plants. Normally it is a medium-sized dark green trees with red berries, hundreds of varieties of American holly have now been developed, providing a variety of forms, leaf characteristics and fruit color. Holly will grow in full sun or shade, but most hollies do better with some sun and can grow to heights of over 80 feet.

American holly is pollinated by insects including bees, ants, wasps, and night-flying moths. Its dense cover offers protection from predators like hawks, and when covered in snow the trees become insulated spaces like igloos. Some 20 bird species rely on holly berries for emergency winter food, but the berries are toxic to humans.

The wood is typically used only for decorative or ornamental purposes since its strength is only mediocre for a hardwood. The association of holly with winter celebrations almost certainly pre-dates Christianity. Druids wore holly wreaths on their heads. In the Harry Potter novels, holly is used as the wood in the leading character's wand.

Draft Arbor Day Celebration 2015
City of Falls Church, Virginia

Location of the first Arbor Day in the State of Virginia in 1892

Welcome	Keith Thurston President VPIS
Remembrances of Trees	Creative Cauldron Players
Neighborhood Tree Program	Seth Heminway NTP Committee
Tree Commission Focus	City Tree Commission
City Efforts	Kate Reich City Arborist
Tree City USA Award	Jim McGlone Virginia Department of Forestry
Remarks by City Leadership	Mayor David Tarter
Adjourn to Social and Refreshments	Village Society

Opportunities for Members

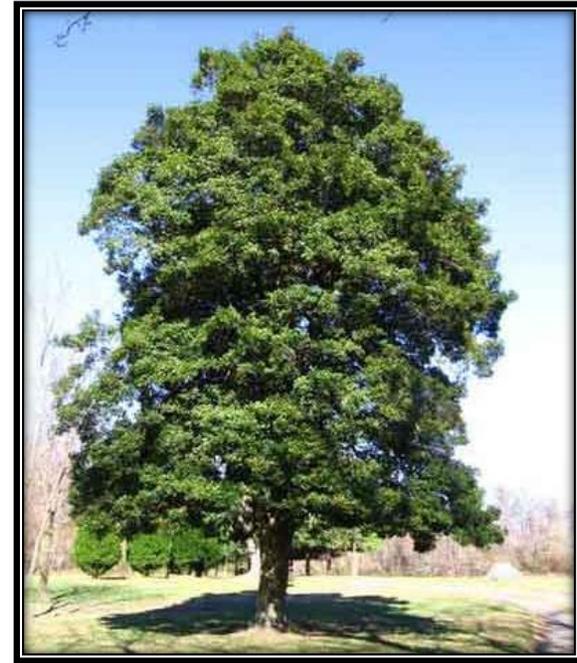
Each VPIS program area needs members to help organize and support. Your talents can help. Just let Keith Thurston (703-241-1672) know of your interests. **VPIS Programs:** Tree Plantings, Summer Concert Series, Memorial Day Parade, Membership Development, Attic Treasures Sale, Independence Day Readings, Farmers Market Booth, Civic Engagement, Development & Design, Local Design Awards, Civic Forums, Marketing, Communications, Social Media, Local Environment, Issue Paper Development.



Female holly trees produces berries.

Arbor Day Celebration

The City of Falls Church, Virginia



American Holly (*Ilex opaca*)

Falls Church Tree of the Year

Saturday April 18, 2015 ❀ 3PM ❀
Frady Park

Sponsored by:

The Falls Church Village Preservation & Improvement Society

and

City of Falls Church, Virginia