



BRANCH OUT BURLINGTON!

Newsletter
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<https://branchoutburlington.org/>

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View from the Tree Tops

Our organization was established in 1996--24 years ago! We have dealt with many challenges requiring our reinvention over the years. This year's pandemic has proven to be the greatest challenges ever. We had to cancel all our established events, like the annual tree planting and monthly weeding bees at the nursery, the popular tree walk and winter seminar, and even the infamous Awesome Tree Contest and awards ceremony. We in *Branch Out Burlington!* (BOB! for short) miss seeing our many faithful friends and realized we must reinvent ourselves again. The pandemic is not abating, so we are taking our show online. Plans are underway to host an art contest for young people with the Young Writers Project (<https://youngwritersproject.org/>). We also hope to hold an online winter seminar and maybe a tree walk next summer. Our tree sale is on schedule and some beautiful varieties will be offered this year. We also will prepare regular newsletters to keep in touch. Until we meet again face-to-face, I hope you will be careful and stay healthy. We will need your sweat equity in the nursery soon enough.

Margaret Skinner, President

The Annual BOB! Tree Sale will open soon. Check our website in mid-December for details and selections. It sells out quickly so don't delay. Proceeds support our tree planting efforts.

Our Annual BUSINESS meeting will be held online via Zoom on Thursday, Dec 3, 6:00-8:00 pm. All are welcome. To attend, contact Nancy Knox at ospreyvt@gmail.com by Dec. 2 to register.



Who Are We?

Maggie Citarella is a new BOB! recruit. She is an ISA certified arborist living in So. Burlington with her husband. Raised in New York's Hudson Valley, she moved from So. Carolina after getting a Masters in Parks, Rec. & Tourism Management at Clemson Univ. There, she worked for TreesUpstate, a community forestry nonprofit. This fall, she planted trees for the Intervale Conservation Nursery. Maggie enjoys getting outside and sharing her love of nature and trees!

As a Boston Univ. alumna, she is excited to be back in New England and to learn from VT Master Naturalist Program. In July 2020, Maggie reached out to Margaret Skinner about getting involved in preserving Burlington's urban forest and volunteering with BOB! She visited the nursery weekly all summer to share her expertise and sweat, helping with weeding and general tree care. With the nursery put to bed, she is now creating "tree profiles" that feature tree species growing in the nursery. These profiles provide noteworthy characteristics and photos so the public knows what the trees planted in Burlington will look like. Check out the one on the American sycamore later in this newsletter. You can find Maggie reading, biking, or walking her dogs. She is best reached by email at margaret.m.citarella@gmail.com. BOB! looks forward to her participation in our future activities.

Look Out for Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*)!

This exotic invasive pest has been slowly making its way East from its original US source in the Midwest. Over 5% of Vermont's trees are ash, and most that become infested will die. That is why foresters are so concerned about it. It is found in several VT counties and was recently detected in Chittenden County. Look for the characteristic D-shaped exit holes in ash trees or the bright green beetle from June to September.

DON'T move firewood around. It might be infested.

Go here to learn more: <https://vtinvasives.org/land/emerald-ash-borer-vermont>



A Call To Action from Bill Allen,

A **BOB!** Board Member



THE BOBNATION CHALLENGE

I found myself aimlessly wondering around my home town. The landscape was very stark and all the people were hustling by me quickly, all wearing masks but still able to navigate social media platforms. They didn't much look interested in the surroundings, but they found the coffee shop. The sky was quiet and no sign of even a hungry squirrel. Where were the crows? Usually large murders of them this time of year. Do you know what a murder of crows is? They really like congregating in graveyards. Crazy birds. Where were the leaves blowing in the cool breeze? More important, where were the flippin trees? My city had no trees!

I walked towards our new park but only came across a vast space of emptiness. A woman with flowers in her hair and a long hippie dress was singing on the steps of our city hall. She caught my attention while strumming on her guitar. I recognized the tune. "They paved paradise and put up a parking lot. They took all the trees and put 'em in a tree museum and they charged the people a dollar and a half to see "em."

Then the alarm went off. Yup, it was just a strange and frightening dream, but Joni (Mitchell) singing 'Big Yellow Taxi' was pretty cool. I jumped from my bed and lifted the shades. My backyard birds were actively feeding at the dozen feeders scattered across the yard. The trees were still there. The hard rain and wind were doing a number on the last of the seasons hanging leaves. A beautiful Burlington, Vermont foliage season was coming to another end. Time for the gray season. Got a problem with gray? At least the pandemic of 2020 doesn't ruin the beauty of nature, regardless of the color.

Anyhow, BOBNATION is real. As you know, *BOB!* stands for *Branch Out Burlington!* If you want to know more about our mission and vision and history, read about us at www.branchoutburlington.org.

We live in a very special place. A small city on the shores of Lake Champlain with an active community who cares for the environment and its never ending challenged urban forest. We are very closely affiliated with our amazing Burlington Parks, Recreation & Waterfront team. They spearhead the tree planting throughout the community. They assist with the organization and maintenance of our beloved nursery located on the property of the University of Vermont Horticulture Research Center.

BOBNATION wants you to participate. Minimal prerequisites required. We plant, maintain, prune, mulch and water trees in the nursery and the city. We even sell, educate and distribute trees. *BOB!* sells over 350 deciduous shade, flowering and fruiting trees annually. Parks & Recreation plants an additional 400 per year. Show me another small city of under 40,000 that can match that. Here's the deal. We want more enthusiasm. We want more activism. We would like to challenge you to join the movement.

Be a good steward and help take care of our urban forest. We also need to lively up our *BOB!* webpage. Write us a story. Send us an informative article. We are looking for a reading fresh and worthy. Fiction or nonfiction. If we like what you send, who knows, you might win a prize.

Go hug a tree. They don't bite. We look forward to hearing from you.

Bill from *BOB!*

**If any reader has a tree-related story, thought or image,
send it to Bill Allen <ballen@hineshort.com>**

We may include it in our next newsletter.

Profiles of Courage & Beauty

Maggie Citarella has described one of the trees we have in our community tree nursery. They and others will be planted in our parks and on Burlington's streets. She will be preparing other profiles in the future so stay tuned.

American Sycamore

Scientific name: *Platanus occidentalis*

American sycamore is a large, fast-growing, deciduous tree that grows naturally along waterways. These trees have a rounded growth form, and typically reach 75-100 ft tall (to 150 ft in the wild) by 75-100 ft wide. Sycamores often live for more than 200 years. The bark is striking with a distinct scaly gray-brown outer layer that peels off to a white inner layer. In April, small flowers in rounded clusters bloom; flowers give way to fuzzy fruiting balls that turn brown in the fall and stay on the tree into early winter. Indeed, this tree is also known as buttonball or button-wood tree. The wood is used commercially for furniture and has historically been hollowed out by Native Americans for canoes. Sycamore is an excellent shade tree and is recommended for large spaces in parks, rain gardens, and residential areas. Tolerant of deer, wet soil, road salt, clay soil, and air pollutants. Needs full sun. Grows in plant hardiness zones 4-9.



Additional Information:

- https://www.chicagobotanic.org/plantinfo/tree_alternatives/american_sycamore
- <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=a891#AllImages>
- <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/platanus-occidentalis/>

Other Burlington news: City Hall Park reopened in late October. It looks beautiful. Check out the video from Joel Baird. They planted a sycamore in the park!

https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.burlingtonfree-press.com%2fvideos%2flife%2f2020%2f10%2f15%2fburlington-city-hall-park-reopens-after-renovation-new-gardens-and-bath-room%2f3668637001%2f&c=E,1,ylrjz_jYbKDQqI5QaklKtWzCf36jOtsYWfJmz8p6-LwJje4qdQUfEiNK-Afr6xv24A-04ExxwMxtvE38jPubuX-AoWWQsmjz3sUJ8R7WPFIF3sLN-UWBqBjqQQ,&typo=1

