

2026

YEAR IN REVIEW

Tree Trust is a grassroots organization that works to ensure the health and longevity of urban trees through education, advocacy, community engagement, and collaboration.

We are a program of the Elora Environment Centre, a registered charity.

For more information please contact:
Toni Ellis at Director@treetrust.ca

treetrust.ca

As of This Year

108 Mature Trees
Preserved

1200+ Saplings
Planted



Tree of the Year
Erin Tree Trust

Our message is resonating more than ever before!

- Volunteers
- Public Donations
- News Recognition

Headquarters Team

Full-Time
- 2 Staff
- 1 Volunteer Executive Director

Part-Time
- 2 Staff
- 1 Volunteer Planning & Policy Consultant
- 1 Volunteer CPA

100+ Volunteers gave their time, skill and energy!

NEW!

New Chapter: St-Thomas
First municipally-run chapter!

23 Dignitaries attended chapter events this year!


Tree Care Day
Mount Forest Tree Trust

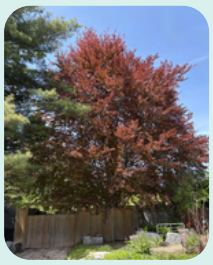
Exapanding our Audience With Creative Programing
- Read A Tree
- Seed Collection club
- Fairy door workshop
- Tree Trail

Signature Programs

TREE OF THE Year

5 chapters participated in the contest this year, each developing its own approach to engage their communities!

Fondation ECHO Foundation



Centre Wellington:
Copper Beech *(Fagus sylvatica f. purpurea)*

- This Copper Beech, estimated to be 150 years old, is loved by all in the neighbourhood for it's bright colours and wide canopy.
- This 93 cm DBH Beech tree received over 50% of the 400 votes in Centre Wellington this year, and is well taken care of by the homeowners.

Town of Erin:
American Elm *(Ulmus americana)*

- Erin's first-ever Tree of the Year, fondly known to the community as "Henry," received 60% of nearly 200 votes cast, reflecting strong community support for the historic tree.
- The celebration featured 32 original artworks by 28 artists, highlighting Henry's beauty, resilience, and significance to the community.





Guelph:
Eastern Redbud *(Cercis canadensis)*

- This year's winner is a 50+ year-old Eastern Redbud, grown from seeds collected in Michigan in the 1970s and believed to be among the first Redbuds successfully grown in the Guelph area.
- The tree has since produced many seedlings that now brighten the neighbourhood each spring!

Kitchener-Waterloo:
London Planetree *(Platanus x acerifolia)*

- Waterloo Region's 2026 Tree of the Year is a 100+ year-old tree standing over 25m tall, with an impressive DBH of 120 cm.
- This London planetree has caught the attention of neighbours for decade and sits on the edge of downtown Kitchener, adjacent to busy King St. W. and the light rail system.





Mount Forest:
Black Cherry *(Prunus serotina)*

- A 100-year-old Black Cherry in Mount Forest Cemetery, standing 30 metres tall with a 91 cm DBH, was named the 2026 Tree of the Year, highlighting the importance of mature tree care and urban biodiversity.
- Mount Forest's third annual Tree of the Year celebration welcomed 70 guests for community activities and educational demonstrations about long-term tree health.

Signature Programs

Ontario Tree Pageant

2026 Winner:
Cucumber Tree *(Magnolia acuminata)*

We were excited to honour this beloved tree. This species is Ontario's only native magnolia and is endangered. It has unique green and yellow flowers in the spring and fragrant fruit that somewhat resembles a cucumber! They are typically located in Niagara Region and Norfolk County, but this cultivated magnolia has thrived for over a century in Brant County.



Thank you to our Esteemed Panel of Judges!

Judy Maddren – *M.S.M. and Retired CBC Radio Journalist*

Mike Schreiner – *Leader of the Ontario Green Party and MPP for Guelph*

Terry Schwan – *Professional Forester and Board of Directors, Forest History Ontario*

Paul Zammit – *Instructor, Niagara College School of Environment and Horticulture and CBC Gardening Show guest*



At over 100 years old, this cucumber magnolia tree in St. George just won Ontario's Tree Pageant | CBC News

In St. George, Ont., stands the winner of this year's Ontario Tree Pageant contest: a cucumber magnolia tree estimated to be over 100 years old. The tree's owners, Jacqueline and Tim Kutt, have lived on the St. George property for 22 years.

CBC / Sep 22

40
Municipalities Participated

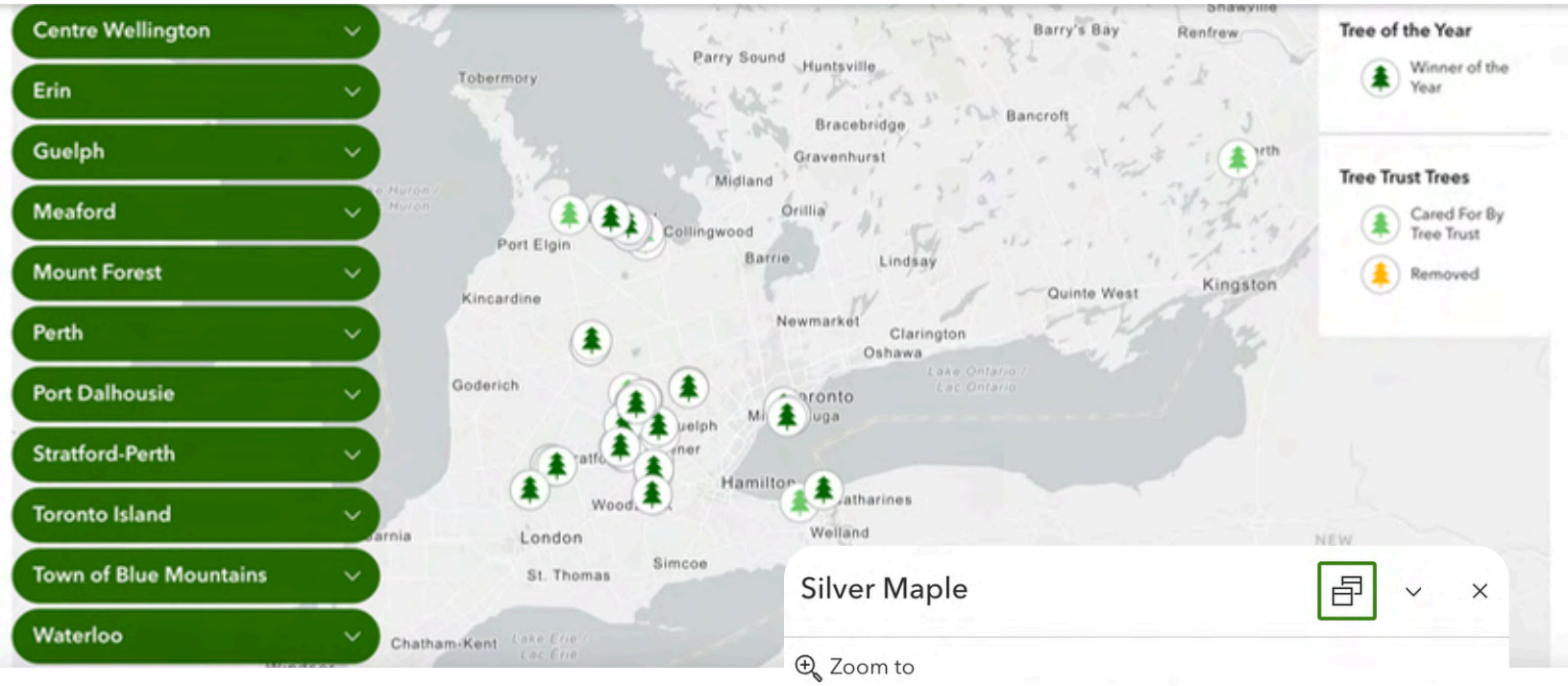
15+
Trees estimated to be more than 100 years old

29
Diverse Species Nominated

Enthusiasm from across Ontario!

Creating a Digital Archive of our Tree Trust Trees

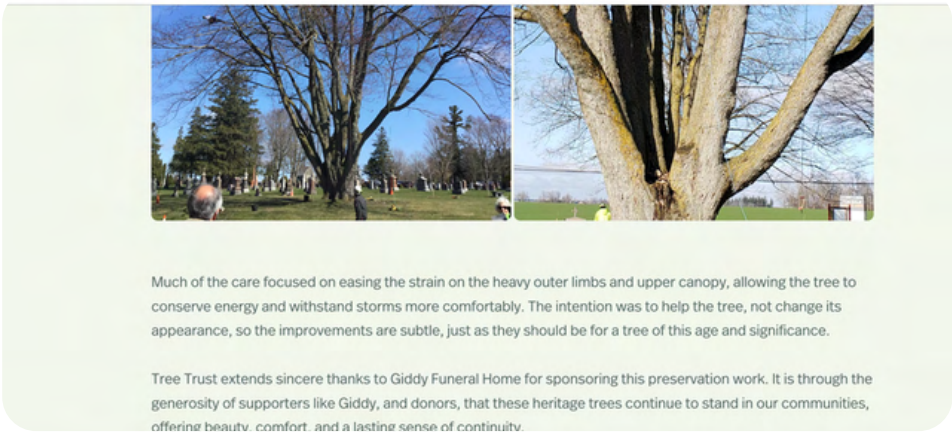
Explore the new **Story Map** on our website homepage to discover all of our Tree Trust trees.



Click on a tree icon and select "View the story!" to learn more about each tree. Use the navigation on the left-hand side to sort by chapter.

This Project was 2 Years in the Making!

Thank you to all of our staff, volunteers and supporters for helping us achieve this.



Creative Programs

Read A Tree

Our innovative, 3-part educational workshop series inspired 20 enthusiastic participants to deepen their understanding of the trees around them. Through engaging, hands-on learning, participants gained valuable skills in tree identification, health assessment, and understanding the vital roles trees play in our environment.







Centre Wellington







The Town of The Blue Mountains

Tree Trail

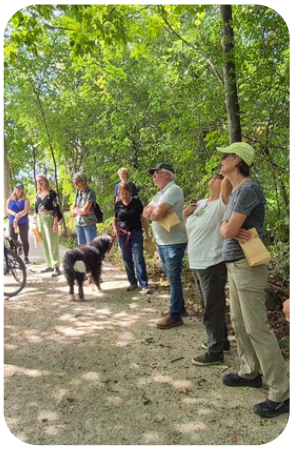
This fall, we launched Tree Trail - just in time to celebrate the spectacular colours of the changing leaves! This free, self-guided tour through the Town of The Blue Mountains invites the community to discover the stories and history of six significant trees. Signs at each tree feature a QR code that visitors can scan to hear its unique story, bringing our local trees to life in a fun and engaging way!

Seed Collection Network

Our 2026 Seed Collection Network Workshops welcomed many new members for a hands-on day of forest exploration, tree identification, and seed collection along Beaver River Trail. Participants learned how to prepare and stratify seeds, helping grow the network's efforts to cultivate native trees for future restoration projects across The Blue Mountains!





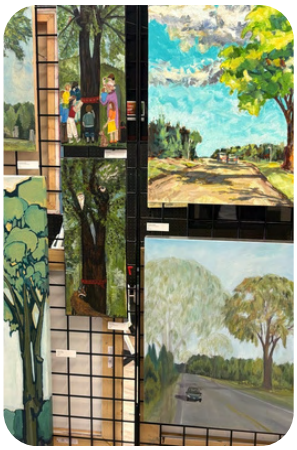


The Town of The Blue Mountains

Creative Programs

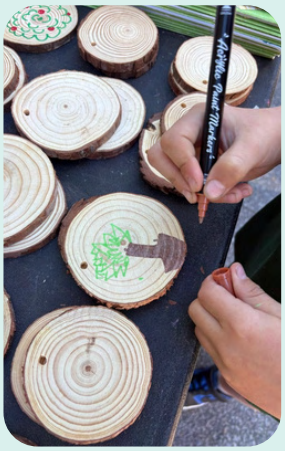
Tree of the Year Art Exhibition

Have you ever seen an entire art exhibition dedicated to a single tree? Erin Tree Trust put out a call to artists to celebrate their Tree of the Year, resulting in a moving and powerful collection of works. Nearly 150 people came out to Arts By the Pond to experience this incredible celebration of art, community, and the importance of mature trees!





Town of Erin






Town of Cobourg

Tree Necklace and Tree Naming

The 2026 Cobourg Tree Trust Tree Care Day was a smashing success at Merwin Greer Public School! Two mature silver maples received care from the Tree Medic, and students voted to name the trees from a shortlist of six. To celebrate their connection with the trees, students also decorated wooden cookie necklaces!

Camp Day at Elora Centre for the Arts & Fairy Door Workshop

Creativity was blooming this summer in Centre Wellington. In July, the team led a day camp with a nature scavenger hunt, leaf printing and tree talk. As part of Ontario Culture Days in September, we organized a free, Fairy Door Painting workshop for 15 imaginative attendees.





Centre Wellington

Professional Development in Arboriculture



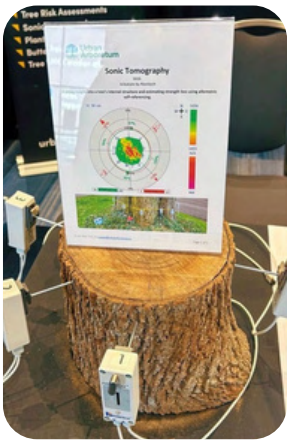
We've been hard at work developing a user-friendly, web-based tool that translates tree measurements into insights about the benefits that your tree provides.

https://treetrustonetree.netlify.app/

Help us pilot test!

Quantified estimations include: **age, carbon sequestration, stormwater retention, appraisal value and sapling equivalence replacement value.**





ISA ONTARIO

Tree Trust attended the annual ISAO conference in February, 2026!

8 Tree Trust Approved Arborists

Working with our community chapters to deliver expert tree care to maintain long-term tree health

Tober Tree Management

ARBOR WOOD TREE SERVICE

WE CARE TREE CARE

The Tree Medic

BAUM Professional Tree Care Inc.

FULL CIRCLE TREE CARE

Tim's TREE CARE AND PROFESSIONAL TREE CARE

Arboreal Tree Care Professionals

Expanding Our Media Presence and Outreach

In 2026, Tree Trust continued to boost its digital presence and extended our reach beyond what it has been before.

We focused on **storytelling**, posting **community-driven content** and **connecting with people** virtually.

Consistent and creative efforts have led to higher engagement virtually and in-person. We have gained more followers, increased interactions and built more relationships province wide.

122,800
Social Media Views

100%
Increase in social media following since 2025



Keep up to date:
@TreeTrustTrees

YouTube LinkedIn

The Buzz Around Tree Trust...

This year, Tree Trust was featured across major media outlets including CBC, Global News Toronto and CTV Kitchener.

60+
News Mentions Across Ontario

CTV · Elora Fergus Today .com · Cambridge Times · Observer · Waterloo Region Record · WA · CBC · Collingwood Today .ca · Happy Eco News · Centre Wellington's Best Music Grand 101.1 FM · The Blue Mountains Review · Brant Beacon · Global News · Guelph Mercury Tribune · Today's Northumberland · The Brantford Expositor · Niagara This Week · Cambridge Today .ca · Penticton Herald · Guelph Today .com · The Hamilton Spectator



Rory Wise, Program Coordinator, talks about the Ontario Tree Pageant on CBC Kitchener, September 2026.

The People and Partnerships Powering Our Impact



BTS Fan Favourite Tree

We were fortunate to be the beneficiary of creative fundraisers this year:

- Toronto BTS ARMY's Charity Raffle
- Georgette Packaging Charity Bake Sale
- Grand River Collegiate High School Enviro-club Thrift Shop for Charity
- Grounded Style CW Co Work - Sustainable Fashion Pop-Up



Student Thrift Shop

Thank you to our collaborators

Strengthening municipal partnerships across our chapter communities in 2026

- Proud recipient of **Municpal Community Grants** in Centre Wellington, Town of Erin and The Town of The Blue Mountains.
- Supported the adoption of the Town of Erin's first **Tree Protection Policy.**
- TBM Tree Trust is working with the municipality to alter road construction designs to **prevent tree removal**, strengthen "working around trees" standards (eg. **TPZs**), develop **terms of reference outlining tree preservation practices** and achieve **Heritage Designation** for a legacy tree.

A heartfelt thank you to our many individual donors and 2026 funding partners

Please Help Support us

Become a Friend of Tree Trust

This spring, we launched **Friends of Tree Trust** to strengthen donor relationships and foster a sense of community among our supporters, united by a shared commitment to protecting mature trees across Ontario.

72 **Friends as of October 2026**

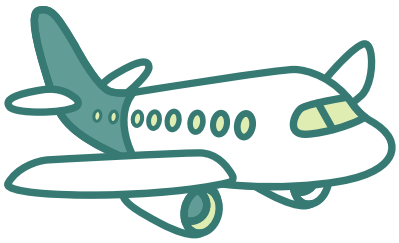
Become a Friend of Tree Trust with a donation of $100 or more!

Being a Friend provides a meaningful way to show your support for the importance of tree preservation.

More Reasons to Give



Love Old Trees?



Offset Your Carbon



Honour a Loved One

Visit the ‘Donate’ tab on our website to make a difference today!

For more donor information contact: Toni Ellis at Director@treetrust.ca

treetrust.ca