



# What It Takes to Be a Champion

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The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, according to the U of I Master Plan, measures more than a whopping 8,000 acres of land in the Master Plan Area. On that land grows too many trees to count... or so you thought.

F&S helps count and maintain all 16,534 trees on U of I grounds. All are viewable through the U of I's "TreeKeeper" database: <https://illinoisedu.treekeepersoftware.com/index.cfm?deviceWidth=1280>.

That includes more than one "State Champion" tree – meaning it is the largest of its species in Illinois.

"These trees, and all of them on campus, are valuable and a privilege to take care of," said Brent Lewis, F&S landscape architect. "Having champions on campus shows the ability of our grounds professionals to carefully tend to their needs over many decades of time, ultimately allowing them to grow into the

great specimens that we often take for granted.”

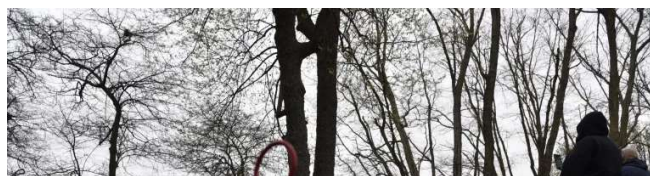
The Carolina Silverbell in the backyard of the President’s House is the latest state champion tree on campus, joining the yellowwood found in the green space north of Lincoln Avenue Residence Hall, which attained champion status on Arbor Day 2019.

In April, UIUC experts and students visited and measured the tree, confirming its status as the largest tree of its kind in the state.

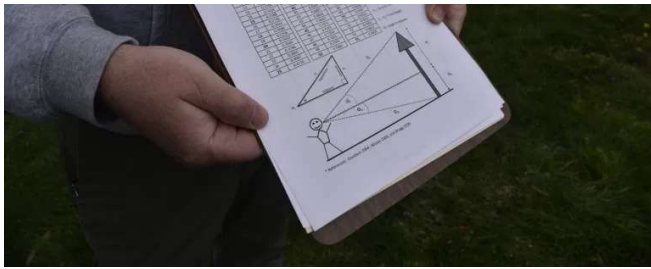
“The two multi-stemmed specimens behind the President’s House are the two largest specimens of this species I’ve personally seen. Granted, I don’t come across this species very often,” said Jay Hayek, extension forestry specialist with the department of natural sciences and environmental sciences. “Carolina Silverbell is considered a state-listed endangered species here in Illinois. Its natural range is limited to just two southern Illinois counties: Massac and Pulaski. It’s not that Carolina silverbell is necessarily so ‘rare,’ it’s just that this species is simply at the extreme edge of its natural range by extending ever so slightly into the southern tip of Illinois. Even in its more natural habitat, this species is relatively uncommon.”



Since 2015, Illinois has been recognized as a Tree Campus USA, meaning the colleges and universities that most effectively manage their campus trees in an academic atmosphere. The F&S executive director charges the Campus Tree Advisory Committee, a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency outreach effort to plan forestry efforts. The Illinois Tree Campus plan is available at <http://go.fs.illinois.edu/treecampus>. All aid in the effort to promote healthy trees on campus and engagement with students, faculty, staff, and community members in the spirit of conservation.







Three key measurements are taken: the trunk's circumference 4.5 feet above the ground, total height, and the average "crown spread," which is how far the branches grow out. The tree's "total score" is equivalent to the circumference (in inches) + height (in feet) + the average crown spread (in feet) multiplied by 0.25.

*The new champion tree measurements:*

*Circumference = 5.57 feet or 66.8 inches • Total Height = 60 feet • Crown Spread: 54.8 feet*

**Total Score = 140.5 points**



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