



## 2022 Summary of Charlottesville Area Tree Stewards Events and Activities

- 1. Tree Sales:** For the first time both of our spring and fall tree sales were held at the VA Department of Forestry Campus (VDOF) on Natural resources Drive, in Charlottesville.
  - **Spring:** On April 9, 2022 volunteers sold 367 trees to 104 buyers in the first hour of the sale and we sold out of trees.
  - **Fall:** On October 1, 2022 during the rain brought by the lingering Hurricane Ian, 37 volunteers sold 338 trees to 98 buyers in 1 hour and 45 minutes; again selling out of trees. To date we have sold 4,448 trees to the public that were potted-up and raised in our nurseries.
- 2. New Tree Steward Class:** 30 individuals completed and passed the hybrid online and field training to be certified as Charlottesville Area Tree Stewards. 10 completed 25 volunteer hours by the time of graduation. The last 2 years of the training have been innovative with a hybrid methodology of on-line lectures/zooms/exams and in-person hands on training. This year's class graduated the greatest number of graduates and certified the greatest number of tree stewards by the end of the course. We also had the greatest number of graduates become active members of CATS. The numbers of participants at our projects has often doubled as a result of the 2022 class members. The training has been so innovative that other Tree Steward divisions in Virginia have been asking for assistance in developing similar programs for their classes.
- 3. Arbor Day:** Two events were held in 2022 for Arbor Day on April 29th. The first was held at Sojourner's Church in the Belmont neighborhood celebrating their American Elm, our Charlottesville City's 2022 Landmark Tree. A good size crowd of church members, CATS members, Representatives from the Tree Commission and local officials were awed by this magnificent tree that had been recently pruned by an arborist and mulched within a huge, framed area. There are also five healthy trees that were planted by CATS during the Belmont tree planting three years ago. The second Arbor Day event was held in Albemarle County at Mint Springs Park. A short hike led to the Boundary Oak by CATS members, park visitors, County staff and Albemarle County Supervisor Ann Mallek.
- 4. The Annual Member Picnic:** Held on June 15, 2022 in Northern Albemarle County. The festivities began at the Landmark Earlysville White Oak, owned by the Charlottesville Airport Authority. It took advance preparation to secure permission for the group to assemble under the tree where Ann Mallek spoke about the tree and the history of the land and Jake Van Yahres spoke about older tree care. We measured the tree. CATS members then moved to Albemarle County's Chris Greene Lake Park for a Potluck lunch.
- 5. Tree Planting:** We received and implemented a second grant from the VA Trees for Clean Water grant from VDOF to plant 20 sizable trees in Darden Towe Park as part of the 2022 tree steward training class. The many volunteers included 30 of the trainees from our 2022 class. We ended the day with the **Training Class** picnic. With this grant we also planted 27 trees at Albemarle County's Mint Springs Park.
- 6. Tree Plantings in Tenth and Page Neighborhood:** Ongoing grants to plant trees have been used to plant trees where members have coordinated with homeowners. Watering buckets, rain gauges and education materials on tree care were shared with the tree's new owners. In the

spring of 2022, 17 trees were planted and in the fall 13 trees were planted with more planned for 2023.

7. **Habitat Trees:** After planting 5 trees on Habitat for Humanity properties in 2021 we were able to plant many more in 2022; all 21 small trees in small urban yards were planted on Habitat properties.
8. **End of Year Annual Meeting:** On December 15, 2022 we met in-person at DoF for our annual meeting and holiday potluck lunch. Members enjoyed PowerPoint presentations from each committee highlighting the CATS activities of the year, and a large variety of door prizes were given out including books, a tree and two wood-turned bowls among other items as gifts.
9. **American Chestnut Trees:** The newly planted trees were weeded, mulched and watered at Pleasant Grove in Fluvanna County near Palmyra.

#### **Accomplishments:**

- CATS had a total of 7,928 **volunteer activity hours** in 2022 (increased by 597 hours in 2021).
- We approved 8 individuals for Associate memberships and we have 179 members.
- The **Mailchimp** email list for public notices about CATS tree walks, classes and events grew to 1,308 individuals. Our **Facebook** page reached people with 901 followers.
- We had **9 zoom member meetings** with educational speaker presentations on tree related topics. 60 members on average attended.
- CATS received \$9,200 in **donations** for 2022, an increase of 22% from 2021 with 5 sizable donations.
- **11 Tree Basics classes** (Social Life of Trees, American Chestnut Restoration, Seasonal Tree ID, Invasives Identification and Control, Pruning and Planting Trees) for the public on zoom, 450 attended, including many from out of town.
- An **OLLI course series of 6 classes** was offered by 6 members for adult learning at UVA.
- We held 20 in-person **tree walks** in various local locations with 250 people attending.
- We **pruned** trees at VDoF, Crozet Park, JWP, Berkmar Drive many times, the Rt 20 Gateway as well as the CATS Grove in McIntire Park.
- At the **CATS Tree Nursery** we had 4 potting parties for the tree sales, involving 10 and 12 volunteers and others who helped maintain the nursery all year.
- We **removed invasives** and mulched in 9 locations including 2 schools and 5 public parks, VDoF and one woodland restoration project area.

In conclusion, the Charlottesville Area Tree Stewards are skilled, enthusiastic and committed volunteers to our local parks and public places and low tree canopy neighborhoods. We happily free mature trees from invasive vines, plant trees where their eventual canopy will be enjoyed and prune young trees. We are thrilled to educate the public about responsible tree care, the value of trees in all environmental settings and personal safety while working outdoors. We enjoy strong and healthy professional relationships with our partner organizations and are committed to doing this work to strengthen green spaces.

Submitted by  
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Charlottesville Area Tree Stewards