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Fagus sylvatica var. laciniata (Fernleaf Beech) ID #1048

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Andrea Connors

April 24, 2020

Bio-140L

Salve Regina University



Fernleaf Beech

Fagus sylvatica var. Laciniata

ID # 1048

Over the course of the semester in Dr. Chace's Biology 140 Lab, students and I each chose a tree on campus to study and analyze. The tree I chose is marked as #1048 and is located on Lawrence Ave, behind McKillop library. The plaque on the tree gave away its name, the fernleaf beech (See figure 1). I chose this tree because I would pass it leaving class in Antone hall, and I have previously learned about the beech- maple oak forest as a freshman in my University Seminar class.



(Figure 1)

Due to the Coronavirus, I unfortunately was not able to visit my tree weekly or monitor any changes it had. However, after conducting some research on the beech tree family I can conclude on the history of this one in particular. There is a wide variety of the beech tree family. This particular beech tree is called the fernleaf beech in the *agaceae* family and is within the

deciduous tree spectrum. Being close in relation to the european beech tree, this fernleaf beech is native to central and southern Europe. Its USDA Growing Zones are between 4 to 7.

The fernleaf beech needs to be in well-drained, rich soil in order to thrive. It is considered a relatively low maintenance tree with average watering needs. It can withstand and survive the exposure of full and partial sunlight. Luckily, this tree is able to withstand seaside tolerance, which is a good reason for it to be located on Salves campus.

A good thing about fernleaf beeches is that they are not very susceptible to pests and disease, however it sometimes does occur. For my tree, photographs taken by Dr. Chace on April 20, 2020, shows the start of lichens. Lichens are organisms with a relationship between fungi and algae. However harmless to the tree itself, it attaches itself to the tree bark and feeds on moisture.

(See figures 2, 3 and 4)



(Figure 2)



(Figures 3 & 4)

Fernleaf beeches typically grow up to 50-80 feet tall and 35-50 feet wide. These trees can live up to 150 years old, and sometimes even longer. They grow, on average about 24 inches per year. They can live through all seasons, but shed their leaves in the fall and winter and blooms monoecious flowers in the spring. It has dark green leaves in the summer and turns bronze in the fall. The grey smooth bark remains relatively the same year round, and is particularly nice to look at in the winter.

The fernleaf beech can also be used and enjoyed for human use. In the fall, these trees bloom edible fruits. During the leaf months, the deciduous flat, broad leaves provide great shade. They are most commonly used as specimen plants and in gardens as hedges or screens. They are very wildlife friendly and attract many different species, especially birds and squirrels that call these trees home.

This arboretum project relates back to Salve Regina and the Sisters of Mercy within the University's mission statement: "... all people are stewards of God's creation". With this project my hope is that students around campus will be able to find a sense of appreciation for not only the trees on campus, but the overall biological diversity at Salve Regina.

Works Cited

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