

Salve Regina University

Digital Commons @ Salve Regina

BIO 140 Arboretum Project

Student Work on Display

5-4-2020

Fagus sylvatica (European Beech) ID #1025

Michaela Cartier

Salve Regina University, michaela.cartier@salve.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.salve.edu/bio140_arboretum



Part of the [Environmental Monitoring Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Cartier, Michaela, "Fagus sylvatica (European Beech) ID #1025" (2020). *BIO 140 Arboretum Project*. 23. https://digitalcommons.salve.edu/bio140_arboretum/23

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Work on Display at Digital Commons @ Salve Regina. It has been accepted for inclusion in BIO 140 Arboretum Project by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Salve Regina. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@salve.edu.

Michaela Cartier

BIO- 140L Humans & Their Environment Lab

Salve Regina University

April 24th, 2020



European Beech

Fagus sylvatica

#1025

Through the end of winter and beginning of spring 2020, I picked and studied a tree to learn about its species, its history, and what brings it to Salve's campus. This European Beech lives in the middle of a cluster of other trees between McKillop Library and Shepard Avenue. This tree stood out to me because of its dual trunks and above-ground root system (pictured below). I didn't know what kind of tree this was when I chose it, but it was an interesting and exciting experience getting to know more. After some quick research, I suspected it was a beech tree, but a visit from Salve's resident tree expert, Mike Chester, confirmed this.



European Beech trees are native to, you guessed it, central Europe. This species was introduced to the Eastern Coast of the U.S. by colonists in the mid-1700s, and later many were brought to Newport during the Gilded Age. Like other deciduous trees, the beech loses its leaves in the winter after turning golden and bronze in the fall, although its peak bloom is April to May. Average height can range from 50-60 ft. and a diameter of 2 or 3 ft. Also, its closest relatives are oak and chestnut trees, which makes sense knowing *Fagus* is Latin for “a kind of oak.”

These trees produce nuts, which are edible in small capacities and still consumed today. Its leaves have been known to be used in salads and steeped for tea. European beeches also have some medicinal qualities, being an ancient remedy for common skin ailments. Other than edible benefits, this tree can be used to make household furniture such as bowls and wooden kitchen utensils. European Beeches also provide benefits to the animals and plants around it. It develops a large canopy, which produces shade, and its nuts are an important source of food for chipmunks and squirrels.

The European Beech has a long history of use for humans, some even believe beechnuts were the first food consumed by people long ago. It's bark and logs were also used as firewood for centuries in Europe. Historians claim that the first written literature in Europe was written on Beech bark, so it is associated with wisdom and knowledge. Students in Europe a long time ago would keep a piece of Beech bark with them to help them succeed with their studies. It is also considered one of the more beautiful looking trees, with wide canopies of bright green leaves, often called ornamental trees.

In the United States, these trees grow best in humid and coastal areas, but needs a lot of space for its roots to grow. These Beeches prosper in moist, well-drained, and more acidic soil. They are often renowned for their beauty year-round, as they are bright and colorful for most of the year and give a nice outline during the winter. They don't have a long history of being in the U.S. but can live for over 300 years.

My tree in particular, has co-dominant stems, which means that there are two trunks of about equal shape and size. This can often be dangerous to the tree because they are much more likely to be damaged during a storm, or other natural disaster. There is not a singular, strong, anchor trunk to withstand damage, making the tree weaker.

References

“European Beech *Fagus Sylvatica*.” European Beech Tree on the Tree Guide at arborday.org.

<https://www.arborday.org/trees/treeguide/treedetail.cfm?itemID=790>.

“European Beech.” The Holden Arboretum, March 6, 2017. <https://www.holdenarb.org/horticulture/plant-profiles/european-beech/>.

Fagus sylvatica - Plant Finder. Accessed April 24, 2020. <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=a866>.

<http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=a866>.

Judy, Robin Harford, Laurie, Simeon Frere, Mick, Rebecca Beswetherick, and Prema Taylor.

“Beech - A Guide to Its Food, Medicine and Other Uses.” EATWEEDS, April 21, 2020.

<https://www.eatweeds.co.uk/beece-fagus-sylvatica>.

Navedo, Lynn, Lynn Navedo, Kim, Kim, Bios Urn, Angela Relucio, Angela Relucio, Urna Bios,

and Urna Bios. “Beech: Symbolism and Characteristics of This Decidious Tree.” Bios

Urn, March 17, 2020. <https://urnabios.com/beece-slender-companion/>.

