



Who are Tree Stewards?

Anyone who attends a Tree Stewards workshop is a Tree Steward. People who may be interested in becoming Tree Stewards include:

- volunteers
- college students
- community members
- city foresters/arborists



If you want to take care of the tree canopy in your neighborhood, community, and state, the Tree Stewards program is for you!

The Tree Stewards program hosts two-day workshops covering a range of urban forestry topics.

The mission of the Tree Stewards program is to:

1. **Educate** participants on proper tree care, biology, and urban forestry practices.
2. **Empower** participants to advocate for community and urban forestry in their neighborhood, community, and state.
3. **Connect** participants to local volunteer opportunities.

The program was developed in 1995 by Pam Louks, DNR Division of Forestry, with assistance from Dick Crum and Jim Barbour, Marion County Extension. It was created to actively engage Hoosiers in various aspects of urban forestry and to begin to cultivate a base of urban forestry advocates. Community and Urban Forestry (CUF) continues to offer this program and ensures that it grows and changes to fit the needs of the community. Today, Indiana has *over 2,000 Tree Stewards* throughout the state.

Upon completion of the course, participants are asked to donate **15 hours of volunteer service** to their community or state urban forestry programs. These hours can include tree planting, maintenance and care, advocacy for the urban forest, presentations on tree planting, or engaging and involving community members in urban forestry.

Tree Stewards Curriculum

Each workshop covers the following topics. CUF seeks to engage a variety of speakers and presenters in this program who bring their unique perspectives to the material. To ensure consistency across workshops, CUF provides standardized topic outlines to instructors.



Benefits of the Urban Forest

This is a crash course on the benefits of trees in urban settings. Discussion focuses on key environmental, economic, and psychological benefits; why the urban forest is in decline; what is being done to enhance the health of this crucial urban natural resource; and how participants can help. Additionally, instructors will note the impact of urban soils on trees. Participants will be able to articulate the key benefits of urban trees after this lecture.

How Does a Tree Grow?

This is a condensed version of Tree Biology 101. Instructors explain the anatomy and physiology of trees, focusing on their key parts and processes. Participants will leave with a general understanding of the structures and functions of all parts of the tree.

Tree Identification

This is a crowd favorite! Participants will focus on the parts of the tree that will help aid in identification, including leaf shape and type, bark characteristics, and tree forms. Weather permitting, the second half of this section is spent outdoors practicing identification. Participants will be able to use these learned tools of observation to help them begin to identify trees.

Right Tree, Right Place (RTRP)

Many problems in the urban forest stem from trees being planted in the wrong places. This lesson is all about species selection. Participants will learn about the fundamentals of RTRP, why they're important, and how to choose the right species for specific sites. Soil will be considered as a factor of the site conditions. Participants will be able to explain and apply RTRP principles.

Proper Tree Planting and Maintenance Techniques

Trees from nurseries come in three main types of planting stock: bare root, containerized, and ball and burlap. Each type is grown and packaged in a particular way. In this lesson, instructors will talk about the benefits of each stock type and the process of selecting healthy trees from a nursery. Then, they will demonstrate the process of planting a tree, from digging the hole and prepping the root ball to backfilling and building a berm. In the maintenance portion, participants will learn about the importance of watering and mulching as part of setting up young trees for success. Participants will walk away with a clear understanding of how to properly plant and care for a tree.

Pruning Basics

In this course, instructors describe different pruning systems, reasons to prune, proper pruning practices, and tree response to pruning. They will also demonstrate how to prune with proper pruning tools. This lecture and hands-on demonstration will teach participants how to visually identify proper pruning cuts so they can ensure that any pruning work they hire is done correctly. Participants will also learn how and when to prune young trees to encourage healthy structure.

Abiotic Disorders and Common Defects

Being a tree is stressful! This session will send participants home with an understanding of tree defects and abiotic disorders that are common in the urban forest. Weather permitting, a portion of this session will be spent outside identifying and discussing defects and abiotic stressors.

Biotic Tree Problems

Learning the process of pest and disease diagnosis can help tree enthusiasts understand the importance of seeking qualified professionals to care for their trees. This lesson focuses on pests and diseases that are common in Indiana. Participants will learn how to detect patterns of abnormality in trees and receive guidance for seeking diagnosis and treatment from a professional.

Advocacy in *YOUR* Community

If you signed up for this workshop, you probably care a great deal about trees. This course will provide a brief overview of the governance and management of our urban forest. With a clearer understanding of the roles that nonprofit organizations, government entities, and private businesses play in caring for our trees, we are better equipped to advocate for our shared urban forest. Participants will consider a few scenarios and brainstorm ways to put this new knowledge into action in their communities.

Review and Volunteer Opportunities

At the end of the workshop, a short, informal review will be offered for participants to reflect on their new knowledge. Each instructor ensures that their presentation includes information that will be covered in the review.

After the workshop, each participant is required to complete and report **at least 15 hours of volunteer service**. This is an opportunity to strengthen understanding of the material, increase the impact of the Tree Stewards program, and encourage connection to local urban forestry efforts.

The CUF Outreach Coordinator will give guidelines for eligible activities, share upcoming local volunteer opportunities, and explain the process for documenting and submitting hours. Participants will leave prepared and inspired to complete their 15 hours of volunteer service.

