

# 20 Trees in Basking Ridge

Common Name – Latin name (Family)

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1. **White Oak** - *Quercus alba* (Fagaceae): It's the best known tree in Bernards Township. This stately 600-year old oak towers over the Presbyterian Church graveyard, the final resting place for 35 Revolutionary War veterans. Its broad canopy of sturdy branches spans over 156 feet and rises 97 feet tall. The distinctive white gray bark and round lobed leaves have provided shade since Lenni-Lenape times. A historic tree that's included in *New Jersey's Big Trees List*, it's a unique symbol for our community.
2. **Eastern Redcedar** - *Juniperus virginiana* (Cupressaceae): Despite its common name, this tree is actually a juniper. It can be found throughout NJ, often in open fields. Birds eat the dark blue pea-sized fruit. These may have been a hedge many years ago.
3. **Eastern Hemlock** - *Tsuga canadensis* (Pinaceae): A tall and graceful tree distinguished by lace-like branches, tiny cones and short, flat needles. Pioneers harvested tannin from the bark for processing hides and may have slept on beds of hemlock boughs.
4. **Norway Spruce** - *Picea abies* (Pinaceae): A native of northern and central Europe, this tree is quite common in the northeast. The sweeping branches hold very large papery cones. It often graces our town center in December covered in holiday decorations.
5. **Black Walnut** - *Juglans nigra* (Juglandaceae): This tall tree likes plenty of sun. It has a compound leaf with 13 to 23 leaflets. Older trees have deeply furrowed bark. The wood is used for furniture, veneer and paneling. Squirrels love the green husked nuts.
6. **Honeylocust** - *Gleditsia triacanthos* (Leguminosae): Wild honeylocusts have very large thorns, but thornless forms are typically planted. Leaves can be single, compound and doubly compound on one tree. The long, flat, brown seed pods are eaten by animals.
7. **Eastern White Pine** - *Pinus strobus* (Pinaceae): This tall conifer adds a crown of branches each year. Look for 5 soft needles per cluster and long slender cones. In colonial times a broad arrow stamp reserved the largest ones for Royal Navy ship masts.
8. **European Larch** - *Larix decidua* (Pinaceae): Originally from high altitudes in northern and central Europe, it's made a home in the northeast. As a deciduous conifer, its needles drop in the fall; you can't call this an evergreen. Similar to the native Tamarack.
9. **Colorado Blue Spruce** - *Picea pungens* (Pinaceae): A native of the western US, this long-lived evergreen is popular for its blue hued foliage and conical shape. If you decorate this Colorado state tree for the holidays, be careful of the very sharp needles.
10. **Sugar Maple** - *Acer saccharum* (Aceraceae): An important shade tree found only in northeast US & southeast Canada. Leaf has long pointed lobes and pale green underneath; turning deep red, orange and yellow in the fall. Tree can be tapped for making syrup after 40 years. The wood is used for flooring and furniture. Some trees have prized birds-eye or curly maple grain patterns.
11. **Norway Maple** - *Acer platanoides* (Aceraceae): This quick growing European native is found extensively as it produces many seedlings. Deep leaf veins and the milky sap seen when a leaf is pulled from the twig distinguishes it from a native Sugar Maple.
12. **Horsechestnut** - *Aesculus hippocastanum* (Hippocastanaceae): This native of Greece was first introduced in Philadelphia. The compound leaf has 4 to 7 leaflets that form a fan shape. It has large white flower clusters and a shiny nut covered by a spiny husk. A fine example is to the right of the funeral home driveway. *Note:* At the request of the business, this tree has not been labeled.
13. **Ginkgo** - *Ginkgo biloba* (Ginkgoaceae): A living fossil and sole survivor of a family that flourished when dinosaurs ruled. This S. Asian native is resistant to pollution, insects and disease. Extracts from the fan-shaped leaves are sold as a health supplement.
14. **Red Maple** - *Acer rubrum* (Aceraceae): Found throughout the eastern US, this popular shade tree has a small simple leaf. Little winged seeds turn red before scattering far in late spring. The wood is soft for a maple. Pioneers made ink and dyes from the bark.
15. **Black Cherry** - *Prunus serotina* (Rosaceae): The largest of our native cherries, this aromatic tree has oblong leaves and dark smooth bark with horizontal lines. Commercially important for its wood, bark extract and fruit; by 1629 it was planted in England.
16. **Pin Oak** - *Quercus palustris* (Fagaceae): A pair of pin oaks frame the library entrance. Commonly found along the edges of swamps and streams, this desirable shade tree also flourishes in well-drained soil. It's also known as Spanish oak and swamp oak.
17. **Flowering Dogwood** - *Cornus florida* (Cornaceae): This popular landscape tree occurs natively in forest undergrowth from Maine to Florida. Early spring brings blooms of 4 large specialized leaves called bracts. The flower is the small greenish center.
18. **Northern Red Oak** - *Quercus rubra* (Fagaceae): Red Oak is one of the largest trees in the northern US. It's an important long-lived shade tree with wood that is highly prized for furniture and hardwood flooring. This is the official state tree of New Jersey.
19. **White Ash** - *Fraxinus americana* (Oleaceae): A valuable timber tree with strong, flexible wood used for furniture, handles and baseball bats. Many ash trees are now in decline and might soon be threatened by the arrival of the destructive emerald ash borer.
20. **London Planetree** - *Platanus acerifolia* (Platanaceae): This relative of the American Sycamore has peeling brown, green and tan bark that stands out in the town center. "Buttonball" fruit appear in the fall. It can grow very large and live to be 600 years old.

# 20 Trees in Basking Ridge – Walking Map

