



## Biodiversity

Walking the trails in Duff, it becomes apparent that the many tree signs of various species represent a healthy and diverse ecosystem. This high diversity safeguards against catastrophic loss from pathogens or pests. Chestnut blight and Dutch elm disease are two examples of exotic pathogens and pests decimating tree populations. Very few American Chestnut trees or mature America Elms exist today in Duff Park due to these outbreaks. In both cases, an exotic pathogen or pest was introduced in a population with little or no genetic resistance with devastating results. While most of the species of American Chestnut and American Elm in Duff did succumb, there are ample trees of other species to maintain a vibrant ecosystem.

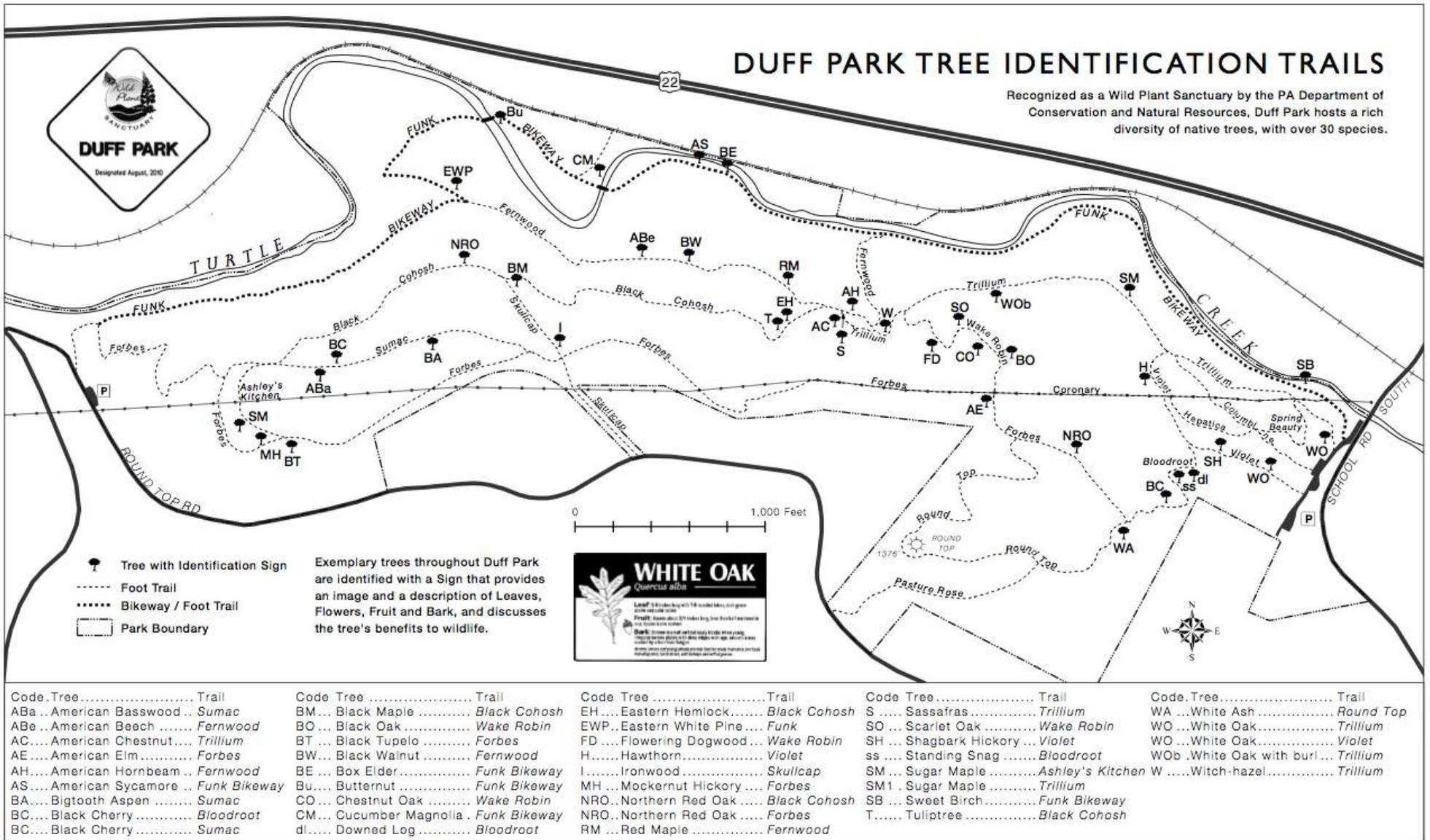
## Old Growth Trees of Duff Park

Home to one the few remaining deciduous northern hardwoods stands of old growth trees in Pennsylvania, Duff Park's largest trees are estimated to be 250 – 300 years of age. Grand trees, both standing and down, contribute to a dynamic ecosystem. A dense canopy shades a regenerating understory creating a complex self perpetuating cycle. Multi-layered in structure, old growth stands provide an abundance of food and shelter for wildlife. The canopy, understory and forest floor all contribute uniquely towards a healthy wildlife environment.

## Duff Park Tree Walk (Park map inside)

Distributed throughout the park are tree identification signs providing information on key characteristics for over 30 tree species. How does White Oak differ from Chestnut Oak or Black Oak? What tree species are most preferred by wildlife? What's the difference between a drupe and a catkin? Explore, learn and be inspired by nature.





**PARK REGULATIONS** (Chapter 166, Code of the Municipality of Murrysville). Please reference Rules and Regulations for Murrysville Parks on the Duff Park kiosk or at [www.murrysvillegov.org](http://www.murrysvillegov.org).

**Volunteers Make a Difference. Call Pia van de Venne at 724.733.2770**