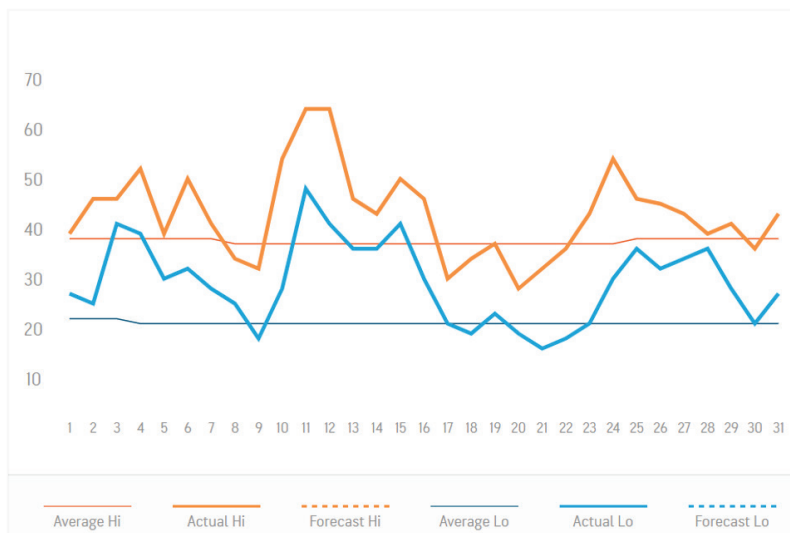


Friends of Oakbourne News

By Tom Bare, President, Friends of Oakbourne

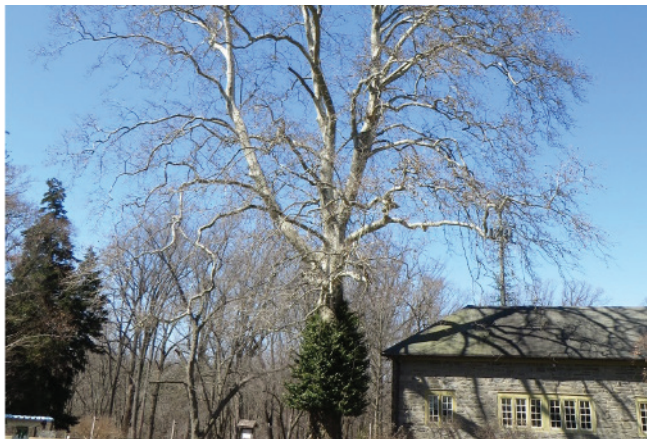
It's spring and the daffodils, crocuses, and hellebores in our yard are blooming or are close to it. And my snow blower was not used (so far, at least) one time this "winter." In the accompanying diagram, have a look at the January 2020 actual highs (heavy orange line) and lows (heavy blue line) temperatures for West Chester. There were only 5 days where the average low temperature was exceeded and 21 days where the average high temperature was exceeded for the month - a very decisive warming trend indeed!



Actual high and low temperature compared to the Average high and low temperature for January 2020 in West Chester, PA.

You may remember from a previous FoO article that Oakbourne Arboretum is home to the second largest London Plane tree in Pennsylvania. In the picture of this magnificent London Plane tree, you will notice what appears to be a bushy evergreen tree-like structure around the main trunk of the tree. This green plant is mainly a euonymus vine interspersed with some poison ivy and bittersweet vines. Deer love to eat euonymus leaves, hence the vine's leaves start about 5-6 feet above the ground. While this cluster of greenery provides an unusual look to the tree, it has bothered me for many years because of the potential damage it could cause to the tree; damage could be caused by the possible introduction of disease and the eventual creeping of the vines to the side branches of the tree.

Consultation with Scott Wade, curator of the Pierce tree collection at Longwood Gardens, and with Harvey Lerman of Bartlett Tree Experts, led to recommendations from both that the euonymus and other vines be removed from the tree. So on a beautiful fall day last year, Rick Brown and I used some large loppers to cut the stems of the vines at ground level and again at about 4 feet above the ground. We then carefully removed the 3-4 foot sections of stems from the tree so that the greenery no longer could obtain nourishment from the plant's roots. Allowing the euonymus to slowly dry out should lead to the leaves falling and to the gradual exposure of the London Plane trunk to the sun and weather. Once the euonymus dries out, the vines will eventually become brittle and we should be able to easily remove them from the tree.



London Plane Tree with Euonymus



Details of the vine stems on the London Plane's trunk which were cut and removed

This winter a park bench was installed and dedicated by the DiTeodoro Family to the loving memory of Rich DiTeodoro who walked the park trails on an almost daily basis with his dog, Chula. The bench is located in a quiet grove of trees adjacent to and slightly north of the mansion's Clock Garden.

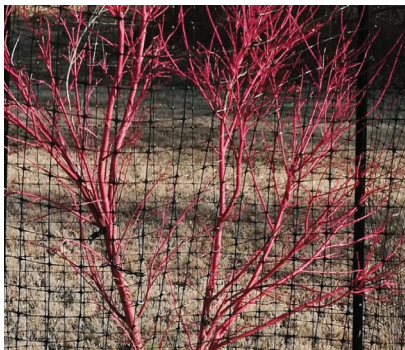
And finally, some close-up pictures of trees in the Bark Woodlet area (between the walking trail and the Gaudenzia border) of the park. These trees are notable for their interesting bark, especially visible during the winter months.



Park bench dedicated to the memory of Rich DiTeodoro



Dawn Redwood



Japanese Coral Maple



Japanese Stewartia



River Birch

Interested in Improving The Arboretum and Surrounding Area in Your Beautiful Township Park?

Please join us at the Friends of Oakbourne's upcoming meeting at 7:00 pm on July 16, 2020 at Oakbourne mansion. Contact Tom Bare (tmbare@hotmail.com or 610-399-1572) if you are interested in donating a park bench or tree to be planted in Oakbourne Park to honor a special person or loved one or to commemorate an important occasion.