

Virginia Beach Notable Tree Program Metrics



The Virginia Beach Notable Trees Program is an outgrowth of the United States National Big Tree Program and the Virginia Big Tree Program. The process of measuring the subject trees is exactly the same for the VBNT program as it is for the National and State programs. That process involves **three measurements** of each candidate tree as described below: Trees are qualified for the Virginia Beach Notable Tree Program using a scoring system that is based on measurements of their physical dimensions:

- **Trunk circumference measured in inches at 4.5 feet above ground level**
- **Total height measured in feet**
- **Average crown spread measured in feet**



The basic tool needed to measure a tree is a **100' measuring tape**. (Trees with abnormal growth habit or on steep terrain will require specialized tools and techniques to obtain accurate measurements.)

Once tree measurements have been taken, the Notable Tree score can be calculated using this formula:

Score (Total points) = trunk circumference (in.) + tree height (ft.) + ¼ average crown spread* (ft.)

(*Note that only one-quarter point is award for each foot of average crown spread.)

The most difficult of the three measurements is ascertaining the height of the tree accurately. The best way to do this is to use a clinometer, but lacking that instrument, the next best way is to gauge the height versus an object of known height (such as a 2-story house...usually 25-30' tall, a 10' basketball hoop, etc). For purposes of nominating a tree, **do your best to estimate the height. It will be measured accurately by us once you nominate it.**

All Tier 1 and Special Category trees will be awarded a suitable-for-framing certificate and a small sign identifying it as a Virginia Beach Notable Tree, which will be affixed to the tree by program personnel. All Tier 2 trees will receive the certificate only (but take heart...your Tier 2 tree could very well ascend into Tier 1 status as you continue to protect it and it grows more magnificent over the years! And you will still have bragging rights via the certificate displayed prominently in your home or business. Note that only one-quarter point is award for each foot of average crown spread.

