

**BLACK OAK**  
***Quercus velutina***

<u>Location</u>	Main Street, West Newbury	
<u>Physical Characteristics</u>	<u>State Measurement (3/9/22022)</u>	<u>WNTC Measurement (04/2020)</u>
Height (ft.)	105.50	99
Circumference (in.)	207.50	228
Spread (ft.)	77.25	77
Points	332.31	346
<u>Estimated Age</u>	290 yrs. (1730)	

Commentary

Nominator: The size and estimated age of this Black Oak are astounding compared with the other trees in West Newbury and make this tree truly remarkable. This massive Black Oak will likely become the State Champion Black Oak for Massachusetts. ***Update as of 2/8/2023: This has now been certified by Mass. DCR as the State Champion Black Oak!***

Committee: The age of this tree was calculated using the standard growth factor table and a value of 4.0 (mid-range for the oaks listed). The largest of two huge Black Oaks located on the Haack property, this massive tree most likely started growing decades before the Revolutionary War.

This Black Oak point value was initially estimated at 346, and the previous Champion Black Oak had a point value of 294. So, it is likely that the Haack Black Oak will qualify as the new State Champion once official measurements can be made. Nomination of this tree as State Champion was submitted to Mass. DCR by Fred Chanania in April 2020.

Other Committee Comments

The age and size of this tree make it both significant and remarkable. As noted, this tree started its life when Massachusetts was still a colony and was likely growing among other very large, colonial-era trees well before the Revolutionary War. Standing on a fairly steep hillside that could not be farmed, this tree survived the many historical eras of the West Newbury landscape, from deep forest in the 1700's to pasturing in the 1800's, and the subsequent heavy agricultural eras of the 1800's and 1900's. While no historical information about the tree is known, the Haack house located below this tree is thought to date from the mid-1700's (no official date is available).

Sibley's Guide to Trees states that black oaks are "often 80' (maximum 131')." Peattie, in *A Natural History of Trees of Eastern and Central North America*, states "Too often, the trunks are short and crooked, knotty, cracked even in the living tree...it has a rough grandeur of its own... in the scraggly outline of its bare branches against the skyline."

Photo(s)



Nominated by: Barbara and Peter Haack, West Newbury  
Fred Chanania, West Newbury

Date Approved by Committee: October 15, 2020