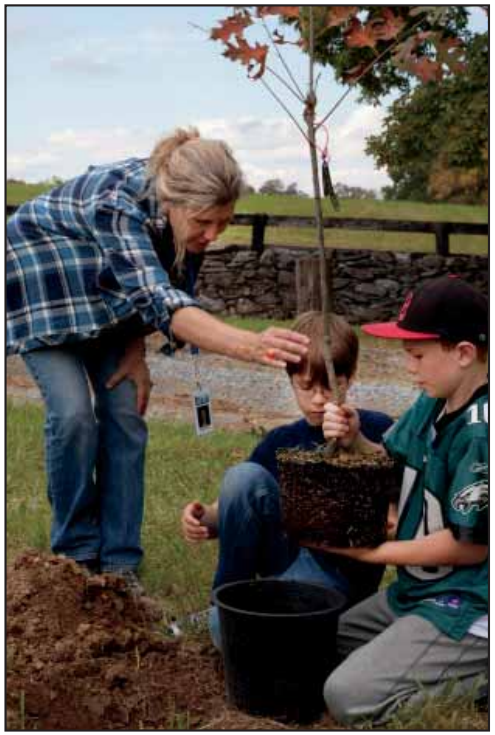
The Making of Our

Community Forest

Many Hands Make Light Work

School and civic groups helped plant this forest. Hundreds of people got their hands dirty digging holes and planting trees. Thank you!



Our Approach

1. Plant saplings with enough mulch around their base to reduce competition from the grass.
2. Keep the grass in place between the trees to prevent weed seeds from germinating.
3. Protect the trees from deer for several years.
4. Let the trees shade out the grass as they grow.

A Forest is More Than Trees

We call it the Community Forest because the community planted it and the community will, over time, enjoy the benefits it provides.

We know a forest by the tall trees that form the canopy, but it is more than that. It is the young trees growing up to replace the old trees as they die; it is the shrub layer below the growing trees; and it is the herbaceous plants covering the ground. The forest is also the animals that make a home there.

To establish this forest, we planted canopy trees as well as small trees and shrubs that will form the upper and middle layers of the forest. How do the other plants arrive? Animals traveling between forest patches carry seeds on their fur and feathers, and spread seeds from the fruits they consume. The buried nut a squirrel forgets may be next year's sapling. It is the animals' community too, and they will help plant it.

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Foundation of the
State Arboretum of Virginia
At the University of Virginia's Historic
BLANDY EXPERIMENTAL FARM
400 Blandy Farm Lane • Boyce VA 22620
540-837-1758 • www.blandy.virginia.edu

A Guide to the

Community Forest

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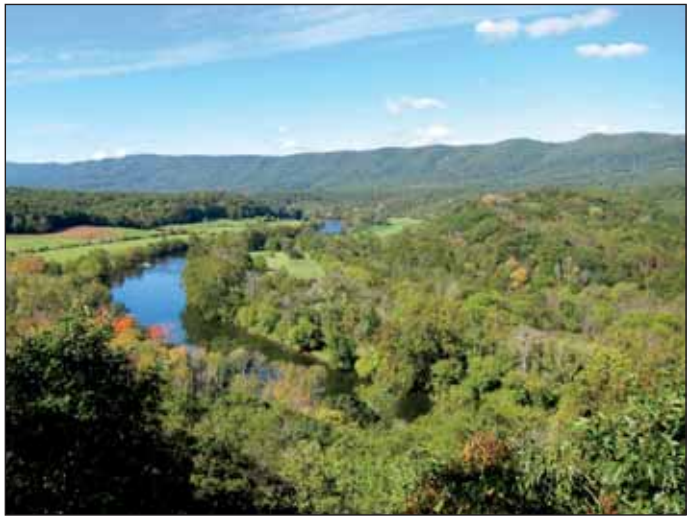
Who Needs Trees Anyway?

If you can breathe, thank a tree.
Trees and other plants produce the oxygen most living things need to survive.

Tim Lumley via Flickr

Birds and other animals rely on trees for nest sites.

Trees store carbon as they grow, reducing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and helping fight climate change.



R. Hsarik via Flickr

Trees slow erosion, especially on steep slopes, which helps improve water quality. That means we have cleaner, safer water to drink.

Lisa Brown via Flickr

Gary Cobb via Flickr

Wildlife find food and protective cover in forests.

Funding for this brochure was provided by The TREE Fund.

TREE FUND
Cultivating Innovation

Green End Up

How to Plant a Tree

1. Select a location that will give your tree sufficient space to grow.
2. Dig a hole twice as wide and a few inches deeper than the root ball.
3. Place a few inches of loose soil in your hole.
4. Make sure the hole is the right depth so that only the roots will be underground. Add more soil if necessary.
5. Place your tree into the hole; have someone hold the tree upright while you fill the hole with soil.
6. Pat the soil firmly, but don't stomp on the ground as this will compact the soil too much, making it difficult for the tree's roots to "breathe."
7. Place 2-3" of mulch around your tree and make a shallow well or moat around the trunk—this will help retain water when it rains. A 3- to 4-foot diameter circle of mulch is plenty. Be sure not to cover the trunk with mulch as this encourages rot.
8. Water your tree regularly until it is established in its new home.
9. Now, take a step back and admire your work!