

Celebrating Kirkwood's 2025 Tree of the Year

The Post Oak (*Quercus stellata*) has been selected as Kirkwood's 2025 Tree of the Year! This remarkable tree is a symbol of strength, resilience, and sustainability, thriving in Missouri's diverse landscapes while providing essential ecological benefits.

A Community Initiative

The Kirkwood Tree of the Year Program was established to raise awareness about the best trees for our community, educate residents on proper tree care, and promote a greener Kirkwood. This initiative is led by the Mayor's Tree of the Year Task Force, consisting of experts from local forestry, parks, and conservation organizations.



Photo Credit: Starhill Forest Arboretum

Learn More & Get Involved

- Plant a Post Oak in your yard or community space to contribute to Kirkwood's urban canopy.
- Visit [GrowNative.org](https://www.grownative.org) for resources on native tree selection and care.
- Join Kirkwood's Tree Stewardship Programs to help care for trees in public spaces.
- Attend the Tree of the Year Celebration for educational events and tree giveaways!

For more information, visit www.kirkwoodmo.org/TreeoftheYear or contact the Kirkwood Urban Forestry Commission.

Thank You to Our Partners

This initiative is supported by the Kirkwood Urban Forestry Commission, Missouri Department of Conservation, Kirkwood Parks & Recreation, and dedicated local volunteers and conservationists. Together, we are growing a greener future!



KIRKWOOD'S 2025 TREE OF THE YEAR

The Post Oak (*Quercus stellata*)



Photo Credit: Starhill Forest Arboretum

Tree Profile



Photo Credit: Getty Images

- **Common Name:** Post Oak
- **Botanical Name:** *Quercus stellata*
- **Native Range:** Found in most Missouri counties and spanning from Texas through Oklahoma, Kansas, and Iowa to the east coast and southeast into Florida.
- **Size:** Medium to large, reaching up to 70 feet with a broad, rounded crown and sturdy branches.
- **Growth & Hardiness:** A slow-growing but exceptionally drought-tolerant tree, adapted to rocky uplands, woodlands, and glades.

Why the Post Oak?

- **Essential for Biodiversity:** Supports over 500 species of butterflies and moths, serving as a critical food source for young songbirds.
- **Wildlife Habitat:** Acorns provide vital nutrition for a variety of wildlife, including deer, squirrels, and birds.
- **Sustainable Landscaping:** Ideal for low-maintenance landscapes; thrives without irrigation and requires minimal care once established.
- **Longevity & Strength:** Known for its toughness and resilience, making it a lasting legacy tree for generations to enjoy.

How to Care for a Post Oak

- **Watering:** Minimal watering needed; only water newly planted trees if soil is extremely dry.
- **Pruning:** Prune as needed to maintain structure, ideally in late winter.
- **Protection from Deer:** In high deer areas, use a 4-6 ft wire mesh fence around young trees for the first 5-7 years to prevent damage from rutting bucks.
- **No Irrigation for Mature Trees:** Once established, do not water mature Post Oaks—these trees are adapted to drought conditions.



Photo Credit: Getty Images