

University of Delaware and Penn State Cooperative Extension offer Tree Climbing School at Winterthur



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**COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**

RELEVANCE

Few introductory tree-climbing classes in the country.

Climbing trees can be a dangerous task that risks injury to both the climber and the tree.



Green industry professionals in arboriculture seek professional development opportunities from the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension to provide career advancement opportunities.



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RESPONSE

This is the first time this training has been offered to our industry in Delaware.
Originated with Penn State Extension



Extension Specialists, Agents, and Arborists collaborated to organize and offer Tree Climbing School at Winterthur Museum and Gardens from July 17-19, 2023.



Arborists, landscapers, new and inexperienced climbers, and others who work in and around trees are welcomed.

Includes:

- Classroom and Fieldwork
- Safety and Climbing Practices
- Equipment and hand tools
- Tree Terminology
- Tree Disease / Insect Diagnosis
- Culture and Pruning
- Knots

RESULTS

Delaware's Tree Climbing School

25  Attendees



Post-Program Survey

On participant's knowledge gained

100%

Gained significant knowledge of:

- Proper Equipment
- Getting into a tree skills
- Maneuvering while in a tree
- Tree climbing safety practices

50%

Learned skills that will improve the profitability of their business or save money for their employer such as:

- How to climb a tree
- Promotion seeking skills
- Inspecting Gear
- Prioritizing Safety

The remaining fifty percent indicated this question was non-applicable.

“I need to get a lot more training before I can offer this as a service.”

“Having additional skills, even in a supervisory role, is something that can always be an opportunity for increased awareness.”



RELEVANCE

Green industry professionals seek professional development opportunities from the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension to provide career advancement opportunities and to provide their clientele with greater assurance that the professionals they hire are knowledgeable and qualified to perform specific tasks.

One area in which green industry professionals need training is arboriculture, including safe tree climbing techniques. Green industry professionals often need to provide consultations on tree health and maintenance and climb trees for evaluation, maintenance and management; climbing trees can be a dangerous task that risks injury to both the climber and the tree. This training covers safety and proper climbing techniques. Despite the need for tree-climbing training, there are very few introductory tree-climbing classes in the country.

RESPONSE

Dr. Jim Savage, Penn State University, has taught Tree Climbing School for nearly 30 years. This training, which had never been offered in Delaware, gets interested industry professionals one step closer to becoming certified arborists. Extension specialists, agents, and arborists collaborated to organize and offer Tree Climbing School at Winterthur Museum and Gardens from July 17-19, 2023. Arborists, landscapers, new and inexperienced climbers, and others who work in and around trees were welcome at the training. The school taught the fundamentals of safe tree climbing and maintenance, emphasizing learning the skills required to climb and prune trees in three 8-hour sessions. Each session included classroom and fieldwork. The training covered safety/safe climbing practices, equipment/use of hand tools, tree terminology, tree disease and insect diagnosis, culture and pruning, and knots. Students who completed this school demonstrated a basic understanding, knowledge, and skill base required in tree maintenance and climbing.

RESULTS

There were 25 participants in Delaware's Tree Climbing School. Participants received a survey upon completion of the program, which aimed to understand the knowledge they had gained and to determine how they would use this new knowledge in the future. There were ten responses to the survey. All respondents indicated that, as a direct result of Tree Climbing School, they gained significant knowledge of proper equipment, skills for getting into a tree, skills for maneuvering while in a tree, and tree climbing safety practices.

Fifty percent of the respondents indicated that they learned skills that will improve the profitability of their business or save money for their employer. These skills included learning how to climb, new skills to allow them to seek promotion within their company, and always inspecting gear and prioritizing safety. One respondent noted that they learned they "will probably tell (their) clients to go with a real tree company instead" because they "need to get a lot more training before (they) can offer it as a service." Another noted that "having additional skills even if you are not in direct use, just in a supervisory role, is something that can always be an opportunity for increased awareness if not profitable endeavors." The remaining fifty percent indicated this question was non-applicable.

RECOGNITION

Penn State Extension, International Society of Arboriculture, Winterthur Museum and Gardens, Delaware Nursery and Landscape Association, Mt. Cuba Center, Longwood Gardens, Tremendous Tree Care, and the Lenape Indian Community.

PUBLIC VALUE STATEMENT

Delaware's Tree Climbing School helps green industry professionals get the introductory training needed to safely climb trees for evaluation, maintenance and management, filling a gap in the limited tree-climbing classes available across the country.

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