

# Urban Tree Phenology

## About Urban Tree Phenology

[www.UrbanTreePhenology.org](http://www.UrbanTreePhenology.org)

Urban Tree Phenology (UTP) is a special project supported by the USDA Forest Service (USDA FS) Urban and Community Forestry Program in the southern region that builds on the innovative citizen science field campaign, Project BudBurst ([www.budburst.org](http://www.budburst.org)). The early success of Project BudBurst provided the impetus for collaboration with the USDA FS. The outcome of this collaboration is UTP – designed to connect urban forest professionals, the scientific research community, and the public in the collection of useful phenological data through simple observations.

Data collected by UTP participants will be made available to networks such as the USA National Phenology Network ([www.usanpn.org](http://www.usanpn.org)) and the National Ecological Observatory Network – NEON ([www.neoninc.org](http://www.neoninc.org)) for use by scientists studying the long term impact of changing environments on plant phenology. As the first external program to be designated as a special project on the Project BudBurst Web site, UTP has developed a template and has cleared the way for additional special projects. Participants in UTP will better understand the value of scientific research by reporting their observations of tree phenological changes in urban settings.

This instructional module was developed to promote the observation and collection of scientifically meaningful environmental measurements particularly for use by urban forest managers. The UTP module provides urban foresters with an overview of the skills necessary to monitor urban tree phenological changes for 24 common urban tree species and report them using an online reporting interface.

## Goals and Outcomes of UTP

### Goals

- Provide urban forest managers and arborists with a practical and useful method for observing and recording local phenological changes.
- Offer urban foresters with an enjoyable and scientifically valid tool for engaging the public in observing the phenophases of trees in their neighborhoods and parks. Urban forests are an important component of green infrastructures and climate change initiatives and are unique in their benefits to the urban environment.
- Provide a connection between scientific investigation, professional urban forest management, and public participation in scientific endeavors.

### Outcomes

- Accurately identify and record the phenophases of trees commonly found in urban environments.
- Contribute high quality data that scientists can use to investigate climate change and public health issues connected to plant phenophases, and for policy makers to use in making informed urban planning and management decisions, as well as support community climate change initiatives
- Engage the professional and non-professional public to become more science literate and involved in an international scientific endeavor through their observations of phenological events in their community.

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