

9/5/2025

Village of Mamaroneck Tree Committee
5 September 2025 Agenda

***DRAFT Minutes of 6 August 2025** (*Attachment 1*)

***Parks General Foreman Jeff Ahne**

***Comments from Residents** (*Please limit in-person comments to 3 minutes*)

***Correspondence**

- 203 North Barry Avenue regarding removal of VOM tree (Attachment 2)

***Old Business**

Maintenance

- List sent to James
- Follow up on recent months?
- Living mulch rings around HIP trees (Attachment 3)

Tree Law

- Letter to Planning Board, 1011 Grecean Point and other sites (Attachment 4)
- Replacement Plantings (Ellen Silver)

New Trees

- Fall list submitted 8/25: 51 Bare Root, 16 B&B (67 total) (10 for Mamaroneck Ave; 16 for Bird Sanctuary)
- Schichtel's Nursery
- Apparent high failure rate among Spring trees (Attachment 5)
- Deer protection in Bird Sanctuary (Attachment 6)

Heritage Trees

- 10 submissions to date
- Nomination period ends 9/31 (Attachment 7)

Public Education

- Tree Mulching flyer (Gail Koller)

*** New Business**

Possible Tree Donation (Attachment 8)

Mamaroneck Ave Tree Wells That Need To Be Widened (Attachment 9)

Fall Tree Walk Date TBA

*** Other Business**

- Douglas Tallamy new book “How Can I Help?” (possible online book discussion?)
- “We Need To Talk About Nature” article (Attachment 10)

***Calendar Notes**

- Oct 8, 2025, rescheduled, next meeting
- Oct xxx Guided Tree Walk

**Draft Minutes Village of Mamaroneck Tree
Committee
August 6, 2025**

Time Start: 7:44 **Time End:** 9:10

Next meeting, September

Members: Beverly, Ellen, Leslie, Michelle, Wendy

Approval of minutes:

- remove “attachment 1” and “agenda”
- Delborgo needs name updated in action items

Comments by Residents:

- None

Correspondence:

- Jackie Caldwell about locating emails from last year, found in September document.
- East basin has dying oak and cherry removal
- Bird sanctuary vines choking and killing trees – plan for volunteer work
- Bird sanctuary cut back 3 feet

New Trees

- Gator bags added to some not all new trees

Heritage Trees

- 6 trees have been submitted

Federal Conservationist of Westchester

- Inform Dennis Delborgo about grant writing education program for

New Business

- Tree landscaping proposal for Palmer/Mt Pleasant – work with the beatification team on how add a layered foliage. Add 3 service berry trees to the fall planting list.
- Add trees for Mamaroneck Avenue to the fall planting for the empty tree wells
- Tree pruning -- “citizen pruners” can help to prune village trees (with training)

Action Items:

- Follow-up with Jeff about bird sanctuary volunteer work
- Follow-up with Kate about how to do a volunteer group
- Email Marc about avenues of communication
- Research how schools make decisions for tree removal – are they subject to tree law?
- Beverly will email planning committee about tree law
- Planning board meeting – need to make comments 1011 Grecian Point *
- Share benefits of tree with the group
- Leslie email the art council on how we might be able to partner
- Leslie email Ellen letter sent to Dennis about permitting idea
- Beverly will assess trees on the harbor and decide on removal
- Beverly trees to the fall list for Mamaroneck Avenue

- Ellen will bring up tree permitting at her meeting to streamline how citizens can verify if homes have tree permit

Maintenance

- Industrial area – what trees are there? Thriving or dying?
- North Barry by Carvel

Attachment 2
Concerns Regarding Tree Removal at 204 North Berry Avenue

Hi Yasmin,

I'm sorry for taking so long to respond to your last email.

As I mentioned, the Tree Committee is not generally involved with either decisions to remove Village owned trees or with approving permits for removing private trees. Those decisions are made by the Department of Public Works. The General Foreman, who is responsible for the decisions, is James Barney. The department phone number is (14-777-7745

Sincerely yours,
Beverley Sherrid
Chairman, VOM Tree Committee
Yasmin de Soizay desoiza@gmail.com

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Silver, Ellen
Beverley Sherrid;
TreeCom

Dear Ms. Sherrid and Trustee Silver,

Thank you for your responses and for acknowledging the impact of these removals. The sudden loss of two mature, Village-owned trees across from the school has left surrounding residents surprised and concerned.

As you noted, Village Code requires a permit for any tree over 8 inches in diameter, advance marking, and in emergencies, documentation within three business days. None of this was visible to residents, and no notice was given to the homes most affected. For Village-owned trees, it seems especially important that documentation and process are clear and visible before removals occur.

If sidewalk damage was part of the reasoning, was an engineering report completed to evaluate alternatives such as panel replacement, root shaving, or barriers? Removal should be the last resort. Since replacements are required under the Code, what is the specific plan for this site — number of trees, species, size, and timeline?

I also appreciate that Trustee Silver has raised the need for permits to be made available online and posted at removal sites. Can you please share what the timeline is for implementing that change?

Lastly, I would like to understand the origin of this removal. Was this initiated internally by the Village through inspection, or was it prompted by a resident request? If it was resident-initiated, can you please share who is recorded on the permit application? That information is important for residents to know whether this was part of a formal Village determination or triggered by an outside request.

As follow-up, I would be grateful to receive:

- Copies of any permits and reports related to these removals
- Confirmation of whether this was considered an emergency removal
- Why the trees were not marked before removal
- Any report showing what sidewalk alternatives were considered
- The replacement plan and planting schedule
- The timeline for making permits accessible to residents online and on-site
- Whether the removal was Village-initiated or resident-initiated

Thank you again for your attention. I look forward to your reply.

Best,
Yasmin de Soiza

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Silver, Ellen

Beverley Sherrid
Yasmin de Soiza <ydesoiza@gmail.com>;

TreeCom
I was told this was a Village owned tree but do not know the reasons why it was taken down.

Ellen Silver
Trustee
Village of Mamaroneck
.....

Beverley Sherrid
Yasmin de Soiza <ydesoiza@gmail.com>;
TreeCom
Dear Ms. Soiza,

I am so sorry to learn of the loss of this tree. The Tree Committee, unfortunately, is not involved in reviewing or approving permits to remove trees. I agree with you, the loss of even a single large tree dramatically changes the light, water management, summer temperature, and character of a neighborhood.

The Building Department will have a record of any permit that might have been issued. If the tree was larger than 8" diameter at 4 1/2' from the ground, and there was no permit issued, the owners will be subject to penalties. If you have photographs of the tree before, during, and after (the stump is worth photographing) it would strengthen the case against the owners. The diameter can be estimated from the stump size.

Trustee Ellen Silver, who is liaison to our committee, has raised the urgent need with the Village Manager for permits to be made accessible to residents on the Village website and to be posted as the site of a removal.

Thank you for contacting us.

Beverley Sherrid
Chairman, Tree Committee

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Silver, Ellen
Kathleen Gill;Scott Ransom;
James Barney

Beverley Sherrid
Hi all,

Was a tree permit issued for the tree removal at 204 North Barry Avenue. Please see the below email from an upset resident about the tree removal and lack of notice to the public.

The Tree Committee is the recipient of these emails but has no knowledge of tree permits issued. Can we please put a process in place whereby tree permits are made public on the website and at the site of removal for all to see.

Thank you,

Ellen Silver
Trustee
Village of Mamaroneck
.....

Begin forwarded message:
Yasmin de Soiza<ydesoiza@gmail.com>
TreeCom;
Beverley Sherrid

Dear Tree Committee,

I'm writing regarding the removal of the large tree in front of 204 North Berry Avenue, which is happening as I write this. This tree was a long-standing part of the streetscape, and its absence will noticeably change the look and feel of the block and surrounding houses - especially given its location directly across from the school.

Why was this decision made? Was the tree diseased or posing a safety hazard? If so, why weren't residents informed? None of us knew this was happening, which makes the process feel unnecessarily secretive. A temporary "No Parking" sign is not adequate

notice for neighbors - it does not indicate the reason, scope, or timeline for such a significant change.

I would like to understand the reasoning and decision-making process behind this removal, as well as why residents are not notified in advance when tree removal permits are submitted for approval. We regularly receive notices for home renovations, zoning amendments, and signage - even for properties not directly adjacent to our own—yet there appears to be no such notification for tree removals, which can have an equally significant impact on the neighborhood.

As a resident, I believe transparency and community input are vital when decisions affect our shared environment and streetscape. Could you please clarify the policy on notification and whether there are plans to make this process more consistent across all types of permits?

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,
Yasmin de Soiza
203 North Barry Avenue
845-323-2209

Sent from my iPhone

Attachment 3 Living Mulch Rings Around HIP Trees

Hi Jeff,

The Harbor Island Conservancy would appreciate your thoughts about a plan for protecting the trees we've planted near the Rushmore pump station.

Several have been significantly damaged by grass trimmers. I've included a photograph of the tupelo below.

We'd like to clear the ground of grass around the base of these trees and plant a ring of **Allegheny spurge** (*Pachysandra procumbens*), the native alternative to Pachysandra often used as a mulch ring. We would do this work and also water it while it establishes.

Thanks for your thoughts.

Beverley



Attachment 4

Village of Mamaroneck Planning Board
Village Hall
169 Mt. Pleasant Ave.
Mamaroneck, NY 10543

1 September 2025

Re: 1011 Grecean Point Tree Removals and Similar Site Approvals

Dear Chairman O'Rourke and Members of the Planning Board,

I am writing on behalf of the Village Tree Committee. We are concerned about recent and pending site plan approvals in which large and mature trees may be removed unnecessarily.

We recognize that Section 318-8 D of the Tree Law acknowledges the Planning Board's sole jurisdiction over approving or denying the removal of trees on a development property for which a tree preservation plan has been approved.

In situations in which properties are not under development, tree permits are granted by the Building Department. The number of large trees that may be removed (dbh greater than 8") is limited by the Tree Law to three within a 36-month period.

Recent and Pending Site Plans

We believe that allowing owners of development properties to take down large trees without reasonable cause, as has happened in certain recent and pending cases, is unnecessary and defeats the most important goals of a strong Tree Law. There is a pending application at 1011 Grecean Point removing 14 trees. Two recent past examples include 921 Soundview Drive (8 trees), and 308 Melbourne Ave (11 trees, plus three with

unspecified dbh according final site plan; the Tree Preservation Plan indicates replacing only one of those trees.)

Benefits of Mature Trees

Large, mature trees convey many benefits to a community. These include increased property values, rainwater management, temperature mitigation, soil stabilization, air quality improvement, carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, and many others.

Scientists recognize that these benefits are enhanced when multiple trees are working together in an area. The threshold for receiving full benefits from a neighborhood's trees is a minimum canopy cover of 40%.

Protecting and Increasing Canopy Cover

At the time our Tree Law was adopted in 2021, data visualization of Westchester County using 2016 USGS satellite data, the most recent available, showed that canopy cover in the Village of Mamaroneck was roughly 25%, significantly below the 40% minimum target. The Village law was passed to increase and protect the tree canopy of Mamaroneck.

There are two ways to accomplish this goal. One is by planting more trees, which the Village is doing both through a robust tree planting program, and by requiring property owners who remove large trees to replace them with new ones.

New trees are important for the future, but they do not fully provide the benefits of mature ones until thirty or forty years after they've been planted. An eight-foot oak with a two-inch diameter contributes little to the canopy.

The other way to preserve canopy is by strict scrutiny of applications to take down mature trees in the first place. As mentioned, the Building Department limits permits to three trees on a single property within 36 months.

Since the 2016 satellite survey of the Village, numerous developments have clear cut many trees. Even though site plans may adhere to the Tree Law's replacement specifications, it will be many years before those new trees achieve the productivity of the canopy we've lost. Consequently, Village canopy cover now is likely even less than it was in 2016.

Is A Removal Essential?

We are asking the Planning Board to consider which removals are essential to the legitimate use of a property before approving an application. Removing a tree in the middle of a building plan may be unavoidable. Cutting down trees for a driveway, or a view, or a swimming pool, or to provide a sweep of lawn is not essential.

Trees Are Infrastructure

Trees are beautiful. Their value, however, is far greater than simple aesthetic appeal. As we have outlined, trees are part of the Village of Mamaroneck's infrastructure because of the essential benefits they offer. It affects the safety and quality of life in an entire community when they are lost.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely yours,

Beverley Sherrid
Chairman, Village Tree Committee

Attachment 5

Spring Trees

Hi Jeff,

Do you have any thoughts about what may have happened to some of the trees we've lost among the ones planted last spring? It seems as if we've had a higher failure rate than normal

Seen in passing (I haven't toured the full list), we've lost 3 of 4 along the road at the bird sanctuary, 3 of 5 along Rushmore in HIP, both trees on the land across from the post office, and 2 of 4 on Mount Pleasant between the post office and Mamaroneck Ave.

It seems unlikely to be the weather, which is the same we've had for several years (high temps and drought in July/August). Also, your people are well-trained in planting techniques so that's not the problem.

Do you think it's the vendor stock? I'm glad to see we're planning to use Schichtel's this fall. Not sure but I think we used someone else last spring.

Any thoughts?

Thanks.
Beverley

Attachment 6
Deer Protection in the Bird Sanctuary

Beverley Sherrid

Jeff Ahne
TreeCom;Dennis Delborgo;
Kathleen Gill

Did you ever receive your order for deer protection shields for the trees in the Bird Sanctuary?
Were they installed?

The Fall list I sent on Monday includes another 16 trees for the Bird Sanctuary. It might be a good idea to order them now so they can be installed as soon as the trees are planted in November.

Thank you.
Beverley



The Village of Mamaroneck

Heritage Tree Hunt

The Village of Mamaroneck has a
Registry of Heritage Trees!

Nominate your favorite tree between June 1 and September 30, 2025
and help our Village create
The Class of 2025 Heritage Trees!

What is a Heritage Tree? Easy! It's a **REMARKABLE** tree!

What makes a tree **REMARKABLE**? It might be....

- **Remarkably* old, large, and/or rare, unusual, or endangered
(and must be a non-invasive species); and/or
- **Remarkably* important because it recalls a historic event

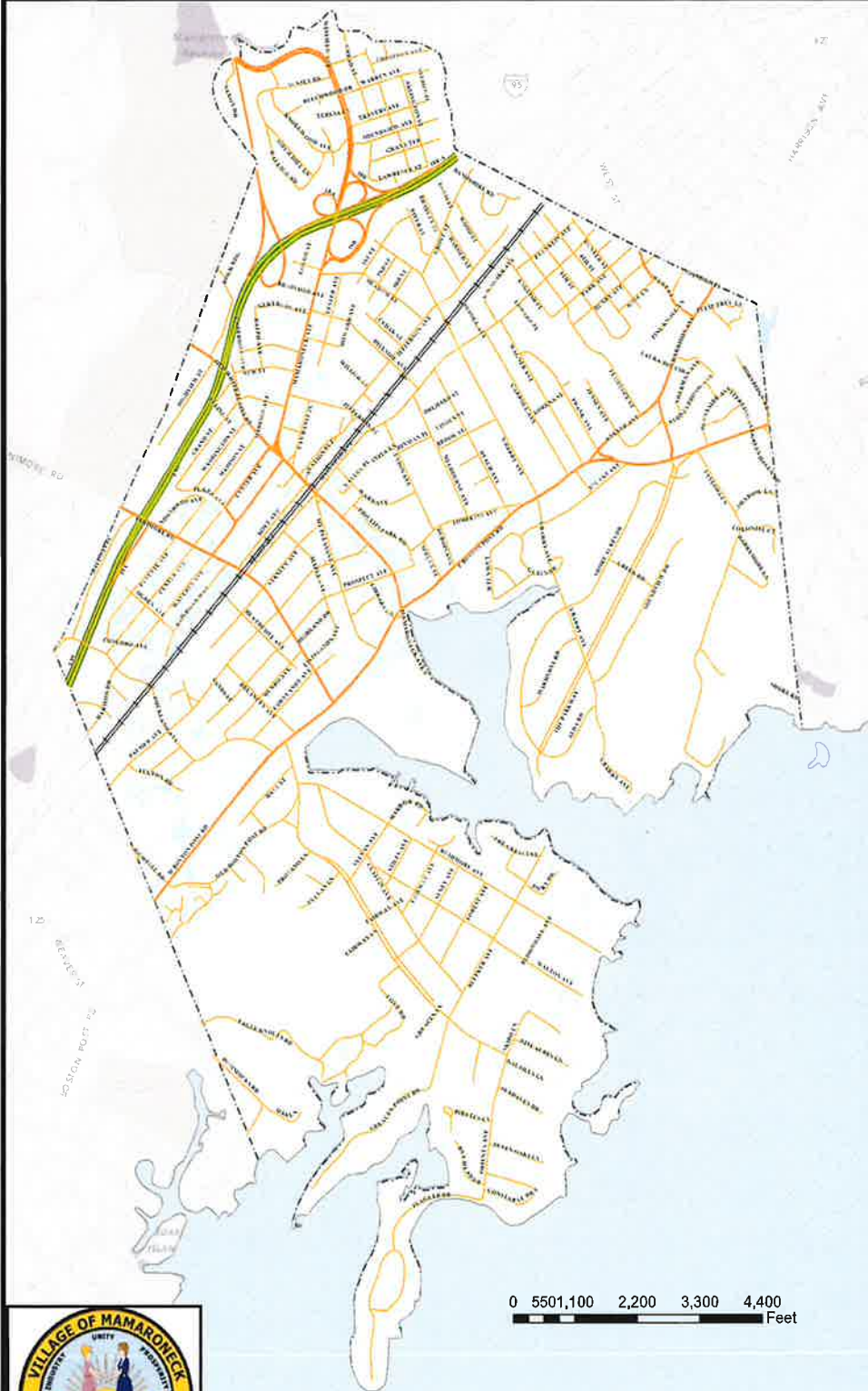
A Heritage Tree may be a Village tree on Village of Mamaroneck property (in a park or along a street) OR it may be on private property in the Village of Mamaroneck.
(See the map of Village of Mamaroneck at the end of this flyer.)

Look around for **REMARKABLE** trees. Then, print out and complete this form, and email it along with a photo of your Heritage Tree to TreeCom@vomny.org by September 30. If your tree is selected, it will be added to the Village Registry, Class of 2025. The Tree Committee will present a Certificate of Recognition to each person who contributes a tree to our Registry.

Your name: _____ Your email: _____
Your phone number: _____ Address of your tree: _____
Tree type or species, if known: _____
Estimated diameter of tree at chest height, if known: _____
Village tree or private tree, if known: _____

THANK YOU!!!!!!

Street Map



Village of Mamaroneck, New York

Attachment 8
Possible Tree Donation

Hi Nancy,

Thank you for getting in touch about Christen's interest in donating a memorial tree. The best locations for a donation would be either Harbor Island Park or Florence Park. The other parks either don't have much space for more trees or have underground utility pipes for sewage, water, flood control etc that are at risk of root interference. If she is thinking of a street tree near her residence, I'd have to take a look at the space to help her select a tree.

I'm happy to talk to her about a species. In Harbor Island it would be worth considering a tree that's ok with salt spray. Florence Park has fewer constraints.

We prefer planting very young trees that will mature into tall trees, like oaks, maples, sweetgums, etc., and we would rather have native species. The young trees we plant tend to be bare root (not balled and burlaped or in containers), roughly 8' tall and about 1 1/2" trunk diameter. These trees establish more successfully and catch up to the larger ones in a few years.

The wholesale prices for the bare root trees I just ordered are running about \$100 - \$150 apiece. I think our Parks Dept would likely do the planting. They're well-trained and have been doing this for 5 or six years, so very experienced (better than some of the retail nurseries).

The Village decided several years ago not to allow memorial plaques near trees in the park. It was beginning to look cluttered. But we'll make sure she knows when it's being planted, and where, so she can come and bring others if she like.

I just sent my list of new locations to Jeff Ahne. If Christen is interested in going ahead, he might be willing to include her tree in his order. We'd have to work out the mechanics of the bookkeeping.

Best wishes,
Beverley

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Hi Beverly,

Christen with the Village of Mamaroneck suggested I email you regarding the donation of a tree in honor of a loved one from Mamaroneck who has passed recently.

Would you have any information on the cost, type of tree, and where it would be planted in the Village?

Yours, Nancy McGuire

Attachment 9
Mamaroneck Ave Tree Wells

Mamaroneck Ave Tree Well Openings That Need to be Widened

Beverley Sherrid

Jeff Ahne;
James Barney
TreeCom; Dennis Delborgo;
Kathleen Gill

Hi Jeff and James,

While I was preparing the Fall list for Mamaroneck Ave trees that need to be replanted, I also noted a large number of tree wells for which the tree openings should be widened.

In many cases the trees have already outgrown their openings. If the grates are not adjusted soon, the trees will die and need to be replaced.

In some cases, the trees have not yet outgrown their openings but their roots are beginning to disrupt the grate surface. In addition to creating a potential safety hazard, it indicates that the trees already need better space.

There are many benefits in having a healthy tree canopy along business streets, including temperature modulation, air quality, and providing an inviting space for people to congregate and socialize. These benefits are greater when the tree species mature to a large height. Store and restaurant signs are also more visible with tall trees because the canopy can be pruned above the street level, whereas small trees may obscure signs.

It is more economical to plant and support tall, long-lived trees than to replace small trees every one or two decades.

I don't know which department is responsible for the tree wells, so I'm sending the list to both of you, trusting you can work it out.

Thank you.
Beverley

Attachment 10

- <https://grist.org/language/nature-word-language-disappear-culture/>

The words we use to talk about nature are disappearing. Here's why that matters.

We'll need to do more than "touch grass" to revive them.

[Kate Yoder](#) Senior Staff Writer

Published

Sep 05, 2025

Once upon a time, the English language was full of stories with “blossoms,” “rivers,” and “moss.” But these words are disappearing from our vocabularies — and along with them, our connection to the natural world they describe.

A study [published in the journal Earth](#) earlier this summer found that the use of nature-related words declined more than 60 percent between 1800 and 2019. The study's author, Miles Richardson, a psychology professor at the University of Derby in the United Kingdom, looked at 28 everyday terms related to nature, including “bud,” “meadow,” and “beak,” using a [Google database](#) that tracked the frequency of words in English-language books over time.

“These words reflect what people noticed, valued, and wrote about,” Richardson wrote in a [blog post](#).

As part of the same study, Richardson developed a computer model to capture how people had lost touch with nature over time. The simulation played out across generations as cities grew and green space disappeared. When he compared the model's projections to the nature-word data, he found that the two graphs matched extremely closely, with less than 5 percent error between them.

Nature is disappearing from our language and our lives

Since 1800, there's been a sharp decline in nature-related words in English language books. It closely matches a simulation of nature–human interactions.

Experts have been raising the alarm over our growing disconnect to nature for decades, often by pointing to how our language has changed. In its 2007 edition, the Oxford Junior Dictionary,

widely used in classrooms in the United Kingdom, [removed dozens of entries](#) related to the natural world, including “acorn,” “bluebell,” and “magpie,” to make room among its 10,000 entries for modern inventions like “blog,” “chatroom,” and “MP3 player.” The decision eventually drew [sharp criticism](#) from a group of authors led by Margaret Atwood. More than [200,000 people](#) went on to sign a petition for the dictionary to reinstate the nature words that had gone missing.

But the editors didn’t budge, since a dictionary’s purpose is to describe language as people use it, not as we wish they did. Older dictionaries had lots of flower words because children lived in semirural environments, but that wasn’t the case anymore, the head of children’s dictionaries at Oxford University Press [explained](#) when the words first disappeared. But the anxiety over the loss of nature language points to a bigger question, once [posed by the naturalist Robert Michael Pyle](#): “What happens to a species that loses touch with its habitat?”

Experts say that detachment from nature is at [the root of many of the environmental problems](#) the world faces today, from biodiversity loss to climate change. “We’ve put a lot of effort into treating the symptoms of environmental crisis, rather than looking at the root causes,” Richardson said. Just as you’re more likely to help a friend than a stranger, you’re more likely to care for nature if you have a relationship with it, he said.

This disconnection hurts people, too. Spending time in nature is good for your physical and mental health, creating opportunities for exercise as well as [lowering stress levels](#), making our brains [more creative](#), and even [improving sleep](#). “There is overwhelming data that nature is good for us,” said Pelin Kesebir, a social psychologist who’s a fellow at the Center for Healthy Minds at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. There’s also research showing that spending time in nature as a kid tends to [translate into environmental concern](#) later in life.

To understand how our relationship with the natural world has shifted, many researchers have turned to studying the media we produce. In 2017, Kesebir and her sister [identified a steady drop](#) in references to nature in song lyrics, fiction books, and movie storylines since the 1950s. [Another study](#) found a marked decline in references in books to 134 common species names such as “bee,” “goose,” and “honeysuckle” over the course of the 20th century. Across [children’s picture books](#) and [Disney films](#), portrayals of natural settings have been on the decline.

“When nature disappears from culture, then all these opportunities to evoke appreciation for nature, respect for nature, interest in nature — those disappear,” Kesebir said.

It’s not just we’re talking about nature less; the feelings behind those words have also changed, according to Robert Poole, a professor of English at the University of Alabama. “I want to know not how many times we say it,” he said, “but when we do invoke it, are we saying it’s beautiful, distant, deadly, savage?”

Poole has studied [how the way Americans write about trees and forests](#) has changed over the past 200 years. Nowadays, “we’re just less likely to use majestic words — ‘lofty,’ ‘stately,’ ‘noble’” — to describe forests, he said. That could be due to people spending less time around trees, or perhaps forests just aren’t as healthy or grand as they used to be.

As our language around forests became less reverent, Poole noted that people began using more scientific and economic terms to describe trees. In other words, people began viewing forests as something from which to extract value, not inspiration.

Richardson's research found that the decrease in the use of nature words became particularly pronounced after 1850, around the time that industrialization and urbanization grew rapidly. When people move closer to cities, where concrete has covered over forests and meadows, it becomes harder to access green spaces. The other side of the coin is industrialization, where nature gets stripped for parts: forests into timber, meadows into farms. The United Kingdom is one of the most [nature-depleted countries in Europe](#). As the British Empire expanded, so did its industrial model. Research has shown that places such as Australia, the United States, and Hong Kong, all shaped by British colonization, have [some of the lowest levels of connectedness to nature](#) today.

Technology may also be a factor: Kesebir's research tied dwindling references to nature to the spread of the TV and other entertainment on screens. Whereas previous generations may have spent their leisure time playing outside, we now spend [much of our free time](#) head-down and phones up, playing video games or scrolling TikTok.

The solution isn't as easy as encouraging people to walk outside and "[touch grass](#)," though that small step is still good for your mental health (no, really, [researchers have studied it](#).) Even efforts to plant more trees and expand parks, while helpful, probably won't be enough on their own. Richardson's study found that the most important factor in predicting what happens next is the attitude that parents pass down to their children. As one generation loses its connection with nature, their children begin life with lower levels of connection, a self-perpetuating cycle.

Jackie Morris, a British illustrator and author, has seen that problem firsthand. Inspired by the controversy with the Oxford Junior Dictionary, she had the idea to write a children's book highlighting the missing words. *[The Lost Words](#)*, illustrated by Morris and authored by the nature writer Robert Macfarlane, turned into a bestseller and "[cultural phenomenon](#)" after its release in 2017. With it, Morris hoped to re-enchant kids with the plants, birds, and critters that had fallen out of their vocabularies. When the book first came out, Morris recalls, TV crews went into schools and asked kids to identify the names of these living things by their pictures. "What I said was, 'Well, you should have taken them 'round your own office, really, because the reason kids don't know is because the parents don't know,'" Morris said.

For Morris, addressing our disconnect with nature starts with what she calls "rewilding our imagination." She remembers, as a child, recognizing birds for the first time, seeing the bright light in their eyes and desperately wanting wings herself.

"Watching birds was just such a joy to me when I was young," she said. "And it shocks me that there are many people who just don't see them."
