

Last month we published an article about the majestic live oaks on Ocracoke Island. You can read that Newsletter [here](#). Because several readers have asked for directions to see the most prominent of these trees we are offering the following information.

Six of Ocracoke's live oaks have been registered with the [Live Oak Society](#) (#s 5908, 5916, 5917, 5918, 5919, & 5920). We believe that these are the six largest live oaks on the island. Below, you can see photos of these trees, read a description of each one, get directions, and view & download maps that show you where they are located.

Please keep the following in mind:

- Three of these trees are on private property; two are located in Springer's Point, a protected land trust; and one is located on National Park land.
  - Please respect the privacy of land owners and remain on public thoroughfares.
  - On public land please abide by all rules, remain on designated paths, and refrain from any activities that would damage the trees or surrounding vegetation or wildlife.
- Thank you for your consideration.

The William Howard Oak:



This is the largest live oak on Ocracoke Island, measuring 17' 0" in girth, with a spread of about 57'. This tree is measured about three feet from the ground, immediately below where the trunk splits into five main branches. It resides on Howard Street and is named for the island's last colonial owner, and quartermaster to Blackbeard the pirate.



Directions: From NC Highway 12 walk down Howard Street, a one-lane unpaved road, about 300'. On the right, about 50' from the lane, against the wooden fence, in the yard of the small cottage, "58 on Howard," you will see the William Howard Oak. (See [Ocracoke Village Map](#), below.)

Howard Street Sentinel:



Although this tree, the second largest live oak on the island, is technically smaller than the William Howard Oak (it's girth, measured at 4' above the ground is 13' 09"), it does not branch so close to the ground, making its massive trunk more noticeable. At about 63', it's spread is larger than the William Howard Oak. For these reasons, and the fact that it is so close to the lane, many people consider it a more impressive tree. It also resides on Howard Street.



Directions: From the William Howard Oak walk about 200' down the lane. Howard Street Sentinel grows on the left, just on the other side of the wooden fence. It is nearly impossible to miss. (See [Ocracoke Village Map](#), below.)

The Mary Ruth Oak:



This impressive live oak also lives on Howard Street. Named after the great-granddaughter of Captain George Gregory Howard (you can see his large two story house with red trim and widow's walk nearby), this tree measures 11' 02" in girth, with a spread of about 57'. It is the fourth largest live oak on Ocracoke.



Directions: Continue down Howard Street about 100'. On your right, on a small hill you will see this stately tree about 50' on the other side of the fence. (See [Ocracoke Village Map](#), below.)

Old Hammock Oak:



Old Hammock Oak is the third largest live oak on Ocracoke. It lives on National Park Service land, measures 11' 10" in girth, and has a spread of about 48'.





Directions: From the village drive north on NC Highway 12. From the first bridge (Island Creek Bridge, just west of the campground) continue about 7/10s of a mile. Park in the small gravel turn-out on the left and walk into the wooded area and through the power company's right-of-way. Walk to the right of the power pole, into the thicket and to the right of a picturesque (but now dead) wind-sculpted cedar (sometimes referred to as the Dancing Lady). Continue down the path. At the fork, turn right and walk about 175 feet. You will see the Old Hammock Oak in a small bend in the path. (See [Old Hammock Map](#), below.)

Pilot Town Oak:



This large live oak is located off the path in the Springer's Point Nature Preserve. It measures 10' around and has a large spread of about 60'. It is named for the island's first settlement, at one time located nearby, a handful of seafaring men and their families who settled on Ocracoke in the early 1700s. These sailors helped guide merchant vessels through the narrow and twisting channels of Pamlico Sound.



Directions: Walk or bike down Lighthouse Road and onto Loop Road, to the entrance of Springer's Point Nature Preserve. There is no parking there or anywhere nearby. Please do not drive. You cannot park along the road or on private property. Walk down the footpath until you come to a live oak where the path has been widened. Normally a bird feeder hangs from one of the branches, with a plastic bucket of bird feed nearby, next to a bench. Stand to the left of this tree, and walk slowly around the tree until you can see the low wall of the round brick cistern about 50' straight ahead. Stop and look to your left. About 50' away, in the woods, you will see the Pilot Town Oak. (See [Springer's Point Map](#), below.)

Blackbeard's Oak:

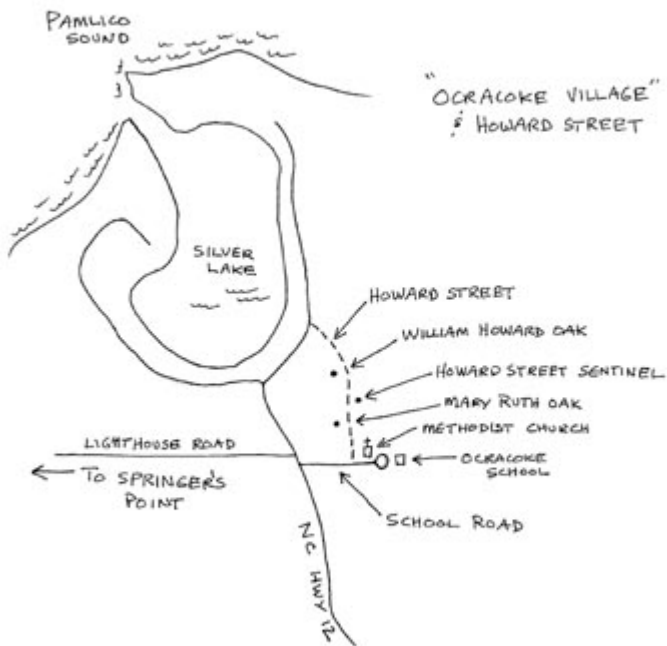


Although Blackbeard's Oak has a girth of "only" 9' 02" making it the sixth largest oak on the island, it is quite impressive because of the very large branch that arches over the path at Springer's Point. It has a spread of about 57' and is named for Ocracoke's most infamous part-time resident.



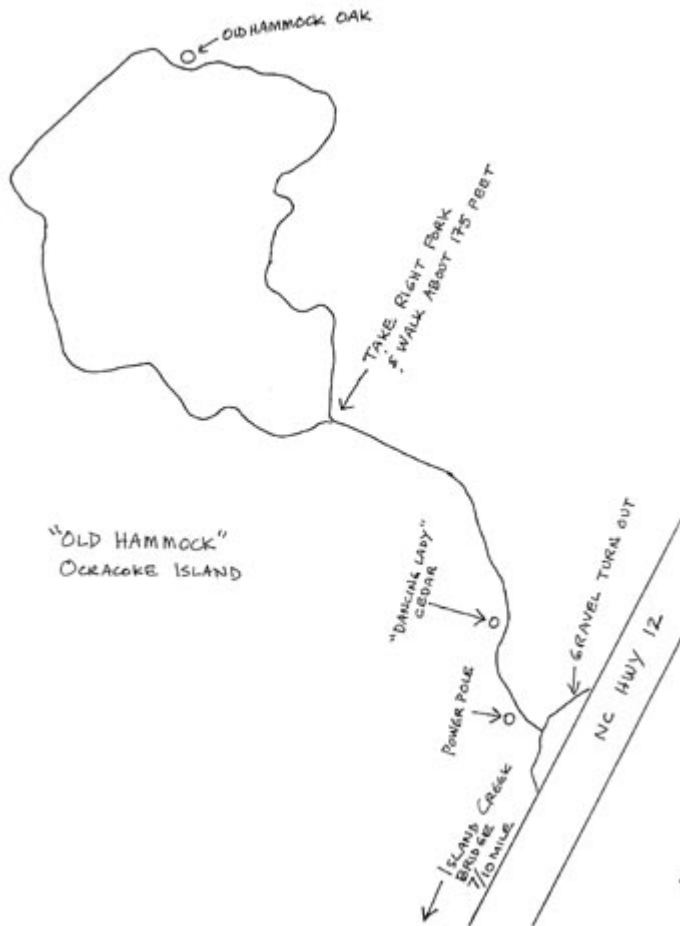
Directions: From your vantage point near Pilot Town Oak, walk to the fork in the path. Turn right and walk between the small graveyard and the old brick cistern. Continue until you are almost to the sound shore. You will pass directly beneath the large arching branch of this very noticeable tree. (See [Springer's Point Map](#), below.)

Ocracoke Village Map:



(Click on the map to see a larger image; then print the map to help you locate the William Howard Oak, Howard Street Sentinel, & the Mary Ruth Oak.)

Old Hammock Map:



(Click on the map to see a larger image; then print the map to help you locate Old Hammock Oak.)

Springer's Point Map:



(Print the map to help you locate Pilot Town Oak & Blackbeard's Oak.)