2022 Jingle Hike Challenge Hints

1. White Rock Nature Preserve - Trail length: 4.2 miles, approximately 0.7 mile to bell from parking lot.

Head to North Ridgetop Trail. Walk north along Bluff Road, then turn right on the gravel road. You will then reach the gate area that marks the beginning of the trails.

Tree Hint: The leakage-resistant wood from this tree species is federally mandated to be used to make the barrels for aging wine and bourbon whiskey, and its acorns are considerably less bitter than others in its taxonomic family.

2. Woodland Park - Trail length: no distinct trail, 300 feet to bell from parking lot.

From Olivers Road you can find parking on the West side of the park. The trail can be found by walking down to the lake from the parking lot.

Tree Hint: This hardwood tree is the cornerstone of maple syrup production, as well as a host plant for the rosy maple moth. This tree is restricted to regions with cooler and moist climates, yet is extremely tolerant overall.

3. Fort Kaskaskia State Historic Site - Trail length: 1.5 mile trail, approximately 800 feet to bell from parking lot.

Park next to Fort Kaskaskia State Historic Site about 700 feet past Garrison Hill Cemetery on Park Road.

Tree Hint: This species’ genus name refers to the thick, aromatic resin it exudes when wounded, and is widely recognized for its populous and messy production of round, spiky fruit.

4. Rock Springs Rotary Park - Trail length: 2.4 mile loops, 0.5 mile to bell from parking lot (path dependent).

At the end of E 3rd Street you will find parking. Take the path that leads to the dog park.

Tree Hint: With tasty seeds protected by the thick, green husk of the tree’s fruit, and chemical defenses which make it extremely difficult for other tree species to grow near its root system—this native hardwood is well protected!
5. Citizens Park– W Belleville Trail - Trail length: 0.8 mile trail, 0.25 mile to bell from parking lot.

At the park entrance turn right. Then turn left to find the entrance to West Belleville Trail and Parking.

Tree Hint: With cork-like bark, warty-protrusions, and small red fruit appearing from autumn through winter—these trees are highly recognizable, especially with their commonality as a street tree throughout midwest cities!

6. Centennial Park - Trail length: 6.9 miles, 0.3 mile to bell from parking lot

From N Belt E/State Route 161 turn into Richland Creek Bikeway. Stay on the paved trail.

Tree Hint: As one of the largest trees native to eastern deciduous forests, this tree develops a massive trunk, bearing a dense canopy and exfoliating bark– with gray-brown peeling away to reveal a smooth, white inner layer.

7. Clinton Hills Conservation Park - Trail length: 1.7 mile loops, 0.5 mile to bell from parking (path dependent).

Parking lot is located next to Fletcher’s Kitchen & Tap. Stay on the central path directly behind Fletcher’s.

Tree Hint: A cone-bearing, deciduous conifer, this tree gets its name from the readiness with which it sheds its needle-like leaves in the fall. Easily recognizable by its “knees”, found surrounding the bottom of the tree.

8. Hamel Community Park - Trail length: no defined trail, approximately 400 feet to bell from parking lot.

Parking lot can be accessed from both Allen Avenue and Park Avenue. The bell can be found west of Park Avenue.

Tree Hint: An invasive species to Illinois, this tree is notable for its diamond-shaped markings along the upper trunk—with dark ridges and furrows on the lower portion, cotton-like seed containing capsules, and densely wooly leaves with white undersides.
9. Belk Park - Trail length: 0.9 mile trail, approximately 430 feet to bell from parking lot.

Once on Belk Park Drive you will find parking next to the Optimist Shelter. The trail then starts from the parking lot.

Tree Hint: With an aggressive, wide-spreading, shallow root system and easily identifiable hanging, sweeping branches, this tree is a non-native in Illinois. Generally, this tree is known for its improper usage for landscaping, often causing severe damage to nearby infrastructure with its roots.

10. Lake Lou Yaeger/Shoal Creek Conservation Area - Trail length: 0.6 mile loop, 0.25 mile to bell from parking lot.

To access the trail, park at Henry Eilers Shoal Creek Nature Preserve parking area and take the trail to the left, then take Loop B.

Tree Hint: This deciduous tree is named for its characteristic gray bark, formed of long, peeling strips. With edible fruit and a particularly noteworthy flavor as aromatic wood-chips for smoking meats, this hardy species is coveted for commercial use.

11. Marine Heritage Park - Trail length: 0.8 mile, 0.3 mile to bell from parking lot.

From the parking lot walk on Marine Park Trail that loops the lake. Do not take MCT Heritage Trail.

Tree Hint: Known by a common name derived from its usage for roofing tiles by early colonists, this tree species possesses lobeless and toothless, large, entire leaves—a unique characteristic for its family.

12. Edwardsville Township Park (Airplane Park) - Trail length: approximately 0.5 mile loop, 700 feet or 0.3 mile to bell from parking lot.

To access the Edwardsville Township Park Trail park at pavilion #5 and walk past the restrooms heading south.

Tree Hint: Typically recognized by its fruit, this tree’s seeds are encapsulated and tufted with a white, fluffy mass inside. In conjunction with its widespread native range, this species is the official state tree of three different states!