Arizona’s Magnificent Trees

Arizona is home to many amazing natural wonders including our trees and forests. From our sprawling Ponderosa Pine forests, to the largest Fremont Cottonwood in the nation found in Skull Valley, Arizona, to the Jail Tree used to shackle criminals before a prison was built in Wickenburg, Arizona – trees are rooted in our Arizona’s history and heritage.

The Arizona Magnificent Tree Program, recognizes amazing trees that are either the largest of their species (Champion Trees), trees that have cultural significance (Heritage Trees), and trees that are proven to have been in their same location before Arizona Statehood in 1912 (Witness Trees).

The Champion Trees attain their status often as a result of a combination of factors such as growing in a location that has been protected or excluded from major disturbances, trees cared for by people, good soil, plenty of water, excellent genetics, and a little bit of luck.

Trees submitted to the Arizona’s Magnificent Tree Program are judged on whether the tree is a Champion by verifying three measurements. Tree measurements include – tree circumference, height, crown spread, A point score is awarded to each based on these measurements. The point score is calculated by adding Tree Circumference + Tree Height + $\frac{1}{4}$ Crown Spread = Total Score.

In 2022 Arizona recognizes 215 trees on the full Magnificent Tree list. There are 134 Champion trees and 81 Heritage and/or Witness Trees. Twelve volunteers helped us verify 36 trees across the state.

We are always looking for more Champions and Heritage Trees waiting to be discovered. Submit your nominations today on this form: AZ Mag Tree Nominations. If you are interested in becoming a Champion Tree Hunter or Volunteer or would like to visit one of our amazing trees please contact the Arizona Magnificent Tree Coordinator at ucf@dffm.az.gov.
This national champ was nominated by Brian Jansen and is owned by ADOT. Found in Yuma County the Blue Palo Verde is the Arizona state tree! It’s distinguished by its blue-green bark. These trees are easy to find in Arizona but so far this is the champion for the U.S!

**Circumference**
86 inches

**Height**
45 feet

**Crown Spread**
48 feet

- **TOTAL SCORE: 143 POINTS** -
Found in Santa Cruz County this state champion was nominated by Scott Roederer. Owned by the United States Forest Service this champion has a natural irrigation conservation tolerance to summer irrigation. The blueish texture of this tree makes it stand out!

- Circumference: 72 inches
- Height: 37 feet
- Crown Spread: 50 feet

- TOTAL SCORE: 122 POINTS -
This Champion located in Santa Cruz County in Patagonia State Park. It was nominated by Jon Orona. The Netleaf Hackberry is fairly drought tolerant making it great for Arizona. The berries are a crucial resource for birds and wildlife! Netleaf hackberry are rugged trees and highly drought tolerant.

- **Circumference**: 92 inches
- **Height**: 52 feet
- **Crown Spread**: 45 feet

- TOTAL SCORE: 155 POINTS -
This columnar senita cactus was nominated by John Blackwell. Senita originated in Mexico. They branch at the base, have relatively few, widely spaced, ribs. Its most distinguishing feature is the tips of the mature, taller stems which are covered with long, hairlike, grey spines. This cactus is both a Champion Tree and Heritage Tree.

**Circumference**
17 inches

**Height**
14 feet

**Crown Spread**
11 feet

- **TOTAL SCORE: 34 POINTS** -
This jumping cholla is a state champion nominated by Jon Orona and is found in Pinal County on state land. This cactus is unique because of the detachment of the spines giving it its name. Even though the needles “jump,” this cactus is not poisonous!

- **Circumference**
  - 20 inches

- **Height**
  - 9 feet

- **Crown Spread**
  - 12 feet

- TOTAL SCORE: 32 POINTS -
From Coconino County this state champion can be found on National Park Service land. Nominated by Mark Lewing and Fred Friesz this tree is at a whopping 20 feet when the average is around 4-10 feet. Stansbury cliffrose is found on cliffs, hillsides, mesas, and in washes on the hot and dry south and west aspects, at elevations from 2,500 to 8,500 feet. It is an important browse plant for deer and sheep in the winter.

**Circumference**

31 inches

**Height**

21 feet

**Crown Spread**

13 feet

- TOTAL SCORE: 55 POINTS -
This Champion kidneywood was nominated by Jackie Lyle and Nick Shipley. The kidneywood tree is native to the U.S. and Southwest Mexico and it is considered a deciduous small tree or shrub with flowers that attract butterflies with their vanilla scent.

**Circumference**
87 inches

**Height**
19 feet

**Crown Spread**
31 feet

- **TOTAL SCORE: 114 POINTS** -
This Gregg Ash was nominated by Scott Roederer. Found at the University of Arizona this Champion is from a family of smaller trees. It requires a low amount of water and blooms in March, April, and May. It was named after Josiah Gregg a traveling botanist. The 'Libby Davison' cultivar was developed by Civano Wholesale Nursery. It's size is slightly smaller and temperature tolerance broader than the straight species.

**Circumference**
12 inches

**Height**
24 feet

**Crown Spread**
23 feet

- TOTAL SCORE: 42 POINTS -
This honey mesquite is a state co-champion nominated by Scott Roederer and is located at Tohono Chul Park. Honey Mesquite are a willow-like, open, low growing tree. Average height reaches 35 feet. The honey mesquite canopy is delicate in nature and is a winter deciduous tree, meaning it loses its leaves during the winter season!

**Circumference**
97 inches

**Height**
36 feet

**Crown Spread**
53 feet

- **TOTAL SCORE: 146 POINTS** -
This champion Quaking Aspen was nominated in 2020 by Jon Orona, found in Apache County, and is owned by the United States Forest Service. This tree is considered a shade tree and an ornamental. It is one of the most widespread species in North America and grows well in mountain areas.

**Circumference**
100 inches

**Height**
76 feet

**Crown Spread**
37 feet

- TOTAL SCORE: 185 POINTS -
This whitethorn acacia was nominated by Jackie Lyle and Nick Shipley. From Pima County this state champ on average is 19 feet tall. Armed with straight spines in pairs, the compound leaves are thick.

**Circumference**
33.5 inches

**Height**
26 feet

**Crown Spread**
27.5 feet

- TOTAL SCORE: 68 POINTS -
This Common Fig was nominated as a Heritage Tree by Jackie Lyle and Nick Shipley. Found in Pima County, this state champion is a multi-trunk tree. On average it grows to 15-30 feet. The canopy is open but low. This is also considered a heritage tree with how long it's been around and it holds some historical value.

**Circumference**

41 inches

**Height**

24 feet

**Crown Spread**

29 feet

- **TOTAL SCORE: 72 POINTS** -
Red Pusch Pistache (*Pistacia atlantica*) 2020

This Champion is from Pima County and was nominated by Jackie Lyle. This tree is considered ornamental so it produces no nuts. With a large trunk it has a strong canopy making it great for shade. In the fall this deciduous tree’s leaves turn a brilliant red, adding color to our urban landscapes where planted.

**Circumference**
- 95 inches

**Height**
- 43 feet

**Crown Spread**
- 51.25 feet

- **TOTAL SCORE: 151 POINTS** -
This Champion Aleppo Pine is from Pima county and owned by a local church in Tucson. Nominated Stan Lowery, this tree is unique with the needle-shaped leaves. Originating from the Mediterranean, it is commonly cultivated in arid regions. Aleppo pine is characterized by 3-4" leaves in bundles of two.

- **Circumference**: 166 inches
- **Height**: 84 feet
- **Crown Spread**: 89 feet

- **TOTAL SCORE: 272 POINTS**
This One-Seed Juniper Champion was nominated by Dan Smith. Found in Yavapai County owned by the Sky Ranch Lodge. These trees are often 6-20 feet tall but this one is 32 feet! With a multi-trunk and gnarly look!

- **Circumference**: 140 inches
- **Height**: 32 feet
- **Crown Spread**: 41 feet

- **TOTAL SCORE: 182 POINTS** -
This Champion sweet gum was nominated by Dan Smith and is in Yavapai County at the Sky Ranch Lodge. It typically is a large tree with palmate leaves. The fruit are spiny dark brown balls known as capsules. Sweet gum are not generally found in the western United States outside of botanical gardens.

**Circumference**  
42 inches

**Height**  
50 feet

**Crown Spread**  
31 feet

- TOTAL SCORE: 100 POINTS -
This Champion Arizona Sycamore was nominated by Nick Shipley and Kathy Montgomery and is in Yavapai County. It was featured in a 2022 Arizona Highways Magazine Article. With an average of 80 feet tall, it has large leaves that resemble a star. These trees require a steady amount of water to grow.

**Circumference**
428 inches

**Height**
82 feet

**Crown Spread**
99.5 feet

- **TOTAL SCORE: 535 POINTS** -
This London planetree was nominated by Dan Smith and is located in Yavapai County at the Sky Ranch Lodge. London plane trees produce green, spiky fruits in clusters and the leaves are similar to a sycamore. It is a highly adaptable species and does well in open spaces such as parks.

**Circumference**
84 inches

**Height**
112 feet

**Crown Spread**
43 feet

- TOTAL SCORE: 207 POINTS -
This Krauter Vesuvius plum was nominated by Dan Smith and is located in Yavapai County at Sky Ranch Lodge. This Champion flowers with pink blooms and has dark purple leaves. In spring the leaves are red but darken to purple in the summer.

- **Circumference**: 24 inches
- **Height**: 47 feet
- **Crown Spread**: 23 feet

- **TOTAL SCORE**: 76 POINTS -
This Mondel/Afghan Pine was nominated by Dan Smith and is located in Yavapai County at Sky Ranch Lodge. Afghan pine originate in the Mediterranean, are commonly used as Christmas trees and have an average height of 40 feet and is a dense tree. They appear in many of our state’s southern urban areas. They look very similar to Aleppo pines, and it's difficult to tell them apart. A difference is the needles on a Mondel pine emerge from the candle as it elongates. So, the candle looks thick and lush as it grows and expands.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circumference</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Crown Spread</th>
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<td>72 inches</td>
<td>105 feet</td>
<td>51 feet</td>
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This Champion was nominated by Jon and Meadow Orona and is located in Maricopa County. Sweet acacia have small yellow puff flowers. They appear in clusters in late winter or spring. Sweet acacia are native to the Chihuahuan desert but grow in many arid landscapes across the globe. Their bark, roots, and flowers have many ethnobotanical uses.

**Circumference**
79 inches

**Height**
45 feet

**Crown Spread**
60 feet

- **TOTAL SCORE: 139 POINTS -**
This Greythorn found in Maricopa County at the Hassayampa Preserve was nominated by Eric Hough. The Champion tree is densely branched, with multiple trunks. The branches are light gray and covered with a waxy bloom. They also have thorn-tipped branchlets.

**Circumference**
43 inches

**Height**
24 feet

**Crown Spread**
24 feet

- **TOTAL SCORE: 73 POINTS** -
This cottonwood was nominated by Jay Brimhall and is located in Navajo county. The cottonwood itself is a rapid growing tree and is great for shade. Nearly every region in the U.S. has a cottonwood! This tree in particular is a part of our Heritage Tree/Witness Tree Program. It dates back to 1836, before any settler of European heritage. This tree also partook in celebrations between the Reidhead family and an Apache tribe after the annual corn harvest.

**Circumference**
43 inches

**Height**
24 feet

**Crown Spread**
24 feet

- TOTAL SCORE: 73 POINTS -