



OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION

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New Champion Trees Discovered

Jackson, Miss. – Arbor Day in Mississippi is tomorrow (February 12, 2016). The trees you plant tomorrow could grow into Mississippi Champions one day!

The Mississippi Champion Trees Program records the largest trees of various species growing in the state. Of the 175 trees registered as Mississippi Champions, nine are National Champions and five are National Co-champions. The Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC) has maintained the Champion Trees Program in Mississippi since 1972. The list of Champion Trees is constantly changing as people explore new areas or take a closer look at the trees in their own backyards.

All trees submitted to the Mississippi Champion Tree Program are compared to the most current edition of the American Forests National Register of Big Trees, if applicable; the MFC nominates the submitted tree for additional recognition as a National Champion Tree.

Since November 9, 2015, three new Champion Trees have been discovered. The European Larch (*Larix decidua*) located in the Greenville Cemetery in Washington County. A European Larch of this size is extremely rare in Mississippi. The current Champion Tree Coordinator, Todd Matthews, said: "You'd have to look for a long time to find one of these [European Larch] in Mississippi, it's actually a first for me. Even if you did find one, you're not likely to find another that's this large in the state." [The European Larch](#) stands 81 feet tall, has a trunk circumference of 10 feet 6 inches, and a crown spread of 60 feet. It was nominated by Wade Wineman of Greenville, Mississippi.

The discovery of the next Mississippi Champion Tree took place in the same Greenville cemetery mentioned above. A Southern classic with lustrous green leaves and fragrant white blooms, [the Southern Magnolia](#) has the designation of being both the State Tree of Mississippi and the State Flower. The Champion Southern Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) measured 80 feet tall, has a trunk circumference of 14 feet 8 inches, and a crown spread of 77 feet 6 inches, also nominated by Mr. Wineman.

Last, [the Ginkgo](#) (*Ginkgo biloba*) discovered at the First Baptist Church of Greenville measured 63 feet tall, has a trunk circumference of 9 feet 9 inches, and a crown spread of 82 feet 8 inches, also discovered by Mr. Wineman. The public can view all three Champion Trees in Greenville, Mississippi.

To nominate a tree, contact the MFC [office](#) in the county in which the candidate tree is located. Any qualified forester may make the official measurements for the nomination of a potential Champion Tree. Only the species listed in the USDA Forest Service publication [Checklist of United States Trees \(Native and Naturalized\)](#), by [Elbert L. Little, Jr.](#), are eligible for listing in Champion Trees of Mississippi.

Resources:

Click [here](#) to visit our website for more information on the Champion Tree Program in Mississippi

Click [here](#) to view the National Register of Big Trees