

Nomination of a Tree to the Florida Champion Tree Record

Nomination of a Florida Champion Tree is open to all species of trees that grow in Florida, whether native or naturalized. Palm trees are included. Species listed as invasive exotics by the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council are ineligible for nomination.

Anyone may nominate a tree. Nominations will be verified for identification and measurement by personnel of the Florida Division of Forestry. To be accepted for consideration in the Florida Champion Tree Record, an original copy of this nomination form must be submitted to the Division of Forestry.

A certified Florida Champion Tree Record nomination form, signed by both the property owner and a DOF forester, must be submitted to the Urban Forestry Coordinator of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Division of Forestry for a tree to be declared a champion.

Eligibility

Trees nominated for champion status must meet the following criteria:

1. Have an erect, woody main trunk that measures more than 9.5 inches in circumference at 4 ½ feet above the average ground level (see Measurements for exception.)
2. Be more than 13 feet high, as measured vertically for a point level with the base of the trunk to the highest twig.
3. Have a definite crown of branches or fronds.

Measurements

Measurements are to be recorded to the nearest whole unit, rounding upwards from 0.5. The following measurements are required:

1. Circumference of the trunk in inches 4 ½ feet above the average ground level. If the trunk is forked, the circumference should be taken at the narrowest part below 4 ½ feet where knots or limbs do not interfere.
2. Height in feet.
3. Crown Spread maximum and minimum diameters in feet.

Point System

Each nominated tree's measurements will be converted to points and the tree with the largest point total will be recorded as the Florida Champion of its species. When the total points of two trees are within **two percent** of one another, each tree will be declared a co-champion. Each nominated tree will be scored on the following point system:

1. Circumference – 1 point per inch.
2. Height – 1 point per foot.
3. Average Crown Spread – 1 point per 4 feet.

All points will be to the nearest whole point, rounding up from 0.5 before adding for the total.

Photograph

A photograph should be submitted with each nomination. Because your photographs may be used for publication, please try to achieve the following:

1. Good scenic contrast. The tree and any persons need to be very clearly depicted for printing processes. You may need to bracket your exposure (-2, -1 normal, +1, +2 exposure factors.), if that's possible.
2. Capture as much of the tree as possible, emphasizing notable or unusual features, as well as showing some sense of scale and proportion.
3. List the names of any persons included in each photograph from left to right.
4. Avoid scenic distractions such as power/telephone wires, trash on ground, vehicles, etc.

General Information

The Florida Champion Tree program is patterned after the American Forestry Association National Register of Big Trees (National Champion Trees) program. The main difference between the two programs is the species accepted as National Champion Trees are limited, to where certain species growing in this state may not be eligible for national champion status. All reigning National Champion Trees in Florida also hold the title of Florida Champion Tree until displaced by larger trees. Additional details about the national program can be obtained from the following website address: <http://www.americanforests.org/resources/bigtrees/>.

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Florida Division of Forestry
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