

THE BIG NEWS

Happenings in the World of Texas Champion Trees

Summer 2008

National Register of Big Trees Published

It's finally here! *American Forests* has published the 2008-'09 edition of the **National Register of Big Trees** as part of the spring issue of their magazine. Texas fared pretty well in the latest contest, with 22 of our recent nominees making it to the national list. Our great state now counts 72 trees among 61 different species that are the biggest in the country, placing Texas fourth behind Arizona (94), Florida (86), and California (82) for the most national champs in a state. We also had the third-highest number of new champions and co-champions, shown in the table below. Congratulations to all of the owners and nominators of these first-time champions from Texas!

| Species | Cir. | Height | Spread | Tree Index | County | Owner |
|---------------------------------|------|--------|--------|------------|------------|--------------------------------|
| Acacia, Wright (Wright catclaw) | 91 | 33 | 41 | 134 | Uvalde | Open V Ranch |
| Anacua | 141 | 55 | 46 | 207 | Hidalgo | Carlos Ibarra |
| Anacua | 146 | 42 | 59 | 203 | DeWitt | Pat Dolan |
| Buckeye, Texas | 59 | 39 | 35 | 107 | Gillespie | McGinley Ranch |
| Bully, gum (gum bumelia) | 87 | 55 | 56 | 156 | Tarrant | City of Fort Worth |
| Farkleberry (tree sparkleberry) | 62 | 18 | 31 | 88 | Houston | Willette Rosson |
| Guajillo (Berlandier acacia) | 18 | 20 | 25 | 44 | Uvalde | John K. Berry, Open V Ranch |
| Hercules-club, Texas | 33 | 41 | 18 | 79 | Tarrant | City of North Richland Hills |
| Juniper, drooping | 110 | 28 | 36 | 147 | Brewster | Big Bend National Park |
| Mountain-laurel, Texas | 50 | 35 | 18 | 90 | Uvalde | Open V Ranch |
| Oak, Chisos red (Graves oak) | 32 | 39 | 43 | 112 | Brewster | Big Bend National Park |
| Oak, Vasey | 60 | 33 | 34 | 102 | Brewster | Big Bend National Park |
| Oak, white shin (Bigelow oak) | 121 | 45 | 72 | 184 | Travis | Skyline City Homes |
| Oak, Chisos | 56 | 34 | 43 | 101 | Brewster | Big Bend National Park |
| Pine, shortleaf | 151 | 91 | 68 | 259 | Smith | Lindale Fishing & Hunting Club |
| Plum, Mexican | 65 | 21 | 31 | 94 | Harris | University of Houston |
| Redbud, Texas | 81 | 20 | 39 | 111 | Parker | Bill & Debbie Postier |
| Sophora, Texas | 74 | 41 | 44 | 126 | Real | Scott & Carol Kolb |
| Sumac, evergreen | 37 | 15 | 16 | 56 | Uvalde | B. F. Dickinson |
| Yucca, Faxon | 72 | 23 | 10 | 97 | Brewster | City of Alpine |
| Yucca, Faxon | 73 | 19 | 7 | 94 | Jeff Davis | Texas Dept. of Transportation |
| Yucca, Thompson (beaked yucca) | 57 | 19 | 11 | 79 | Dallas | Alexandra Huerta |

Of course, like any competition, you can't win them all.... Our champion Mohr's oak (*Quercus mohriana*) was dethroned by a tree in (of all places) Pennsylvania, our Texas mulberry (*Morus microphylla*) lost its crown to a 175-point behemoth in Arizona, and our western soapberry (*Sapindus saponaria var. drummondii*) champ was knocked off its perch by a Kansas tree.

Ornamental List Coming Soon

It catches your eye as you drive past an old cemetery, or perhaps while walking the dog to the park: a really big crapemyrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*) or some other non-native species. You rush home to look up the state champ measurements, but can't find the species listed. What gives? Well, our Texas big tree registry lists *native* and *naturalized* trees only, not ornamentals. But that will soon change with the posting of our first list of 30-or-so significant ornamental species in Texas. Watch the TFS website (<http://texasforests.tamu.edu>) for details.

Quarterly List Published

Below are the new state champs or co-champs crowned so far in 2008:

| Species | Cir. | Height | Spread | Tree Index | County | Owner |
|----------------------|------|--------|--------|------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Blackhaw, rusty | 20 | 15 | 19 | 40 | Harris | Houston Arboretum |
| Cherry, black | 188 | 67 | 77 | 274 | Harrison | Fort Stagers |
| Cottonwood, plains | 248 | 96 | 93 | 367 | Armstrong | Ollinger Land & Cattle Co. |
| Elm, slippery | 88 | 80 | 67 | 185 | Ellis | Steve Rose |
| Parasoltree, Chinese | 67 | 39 | 42 | 117 | Dallas | Terry Robinson |

In Memorium

During our search for new state champions, we discovered that some have died since the last time they were measured (or we didn't "discover" them at all). These include the Texan sugarberry (*Celtis laevigata var. texana*) and our rusty blackhaw (*Viburnum rufidulum*) champs.