

# INSIDER'S GUIDE TO ALABAMA'S CHAMPION TREE PROGRAM

**What is the Champion Tree Program?** Since 1970, the AFC has sponsored a program to locate and recognize the champion (largest) trees of each species.

**What species are eligible?** A species must be recognized as native or naturalized in Alabama. To determine eligibility, the AFC adheres to a list of native and naturalized tree species developed by Lisa Samuelson, Professor, School of Forestry & Wildlife Sciences, Auburn University.

**What is the definition of a tree?** Trees are woody plants having one erect perennial stem or trunk at least 9.5 inches in circumference (3 inches in diameter) at 4.5 feet above the ground, a definitely formed crown of foliage and a height of at least 13 feet.

## **When can a tree be nominated?**

- Trees may be nominated any time of the year. However, to be eligible for the current year a tree must be nominated by June 1<sup>st</sup>.
- New state champions will be announced and added to the on-line Champion Tree publication no later than July 31<sup>st</sup> each year.
- Alabama champions are submitted for competition in the National Big Tree Program. New national champion trees will be announced and added to the on-line Champion Tree publication no later than October 31<sup>st</sup> each year.

## **How do I nominate a tree?**

- Nomination forms are available [on-line](#) and in county AFC offices.
- The nomination form is one two-part page: a nomination portion and a condition portion.
- The nomination form may be completed on-line or sent via fax or mail.
- Unlike the Famous and Historic Tree Program, an AFC forester or forestry specialist must complete the condition portion.

## **What are the criteria for selection?**

The American Forestry Association formula for determining Champion Trees:  
Circumference in inches at four 1/2 feet plus height in feet plus 1/4 crown spread in feet.  
A nominee will replace a champion if it has more points. When two trees have scores that fall within five points of each other, they are listed as co-champions.

## **What happens once a tree is approved?**

The owner and nominator receive certificates. A tree marker is provided to the owner of the tree for placement during a public ceremony. The AFC is not responsible for the ceremony.