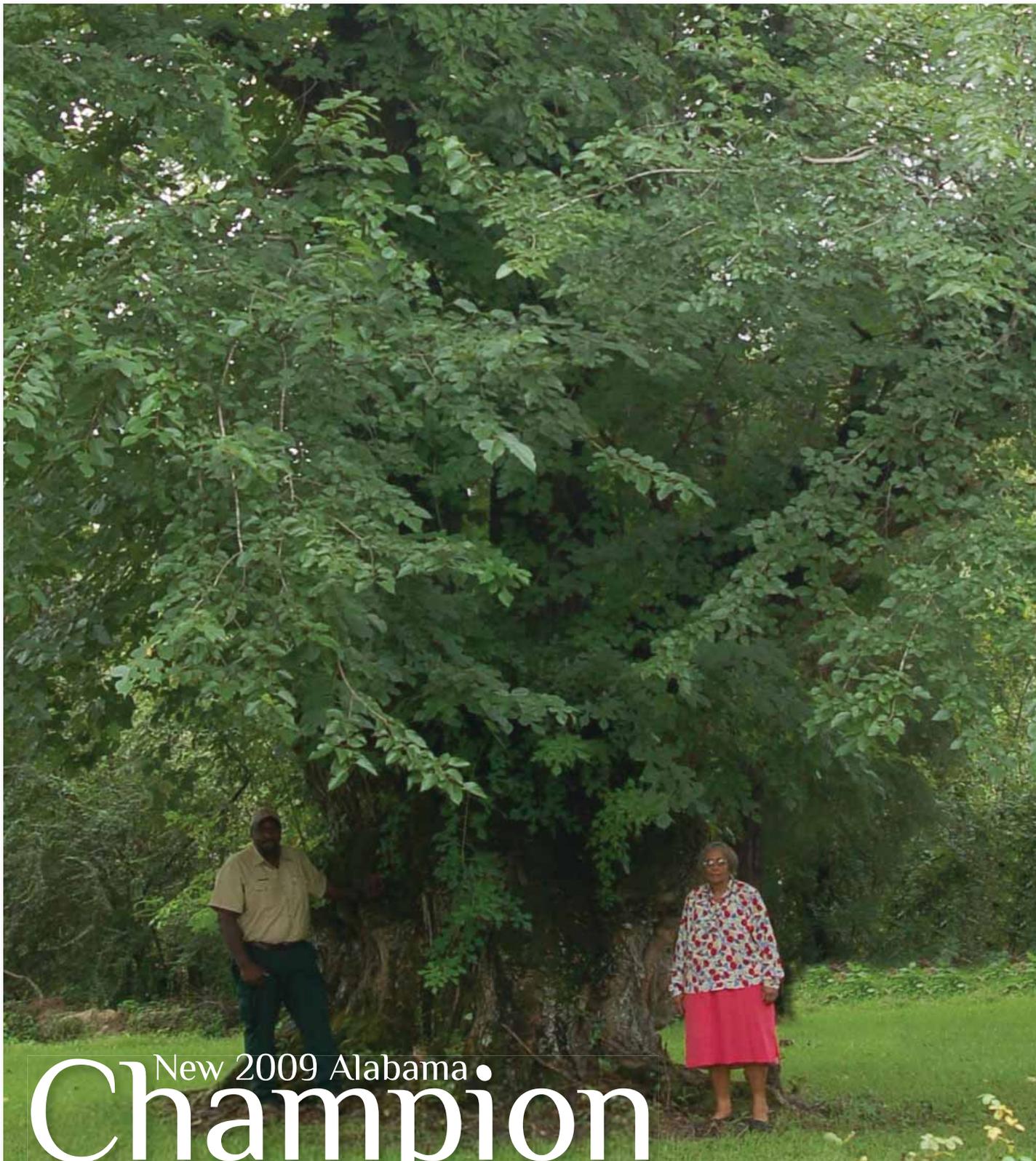


Red Mulberry

Choctaw County, Alabama | Nominator: Lorenzo Johnson | Owner: William J. Scruggs, Sr.



New 2009 Alabama Champion Trees

By Brian Hendricks, Alabama Forestry Commission

Interest in Alabama's Champion Tree program remains strong as evidenced by the fact that 64 nominations from all regions of the state were submitted in 2009. The final tabulations have been completed, and 24 of the 64 trees nominated for Champion Tree designation have been declared new champions!

Of these 24 new champion trees, nine species dethroned the 2008 champions, while 15 filled vacancies for species that did not have a current champion. With the addition of these 15 trees, Alabama now has a total of 152 champions. A list of the 24 new Champion Trees for 2009 is as follows:

Tree Species	County	Nominator	Owner
American Smoketree	Madison	Brian Bradley	Land Trust of Huntsville & North Alabama
Cedar, Atlantic White	Baldwin	Forest Kibler	Jeanette & Forest Kibler
Cherry, Black	Madison	Doug Chapman	Roger Everett & Joyce Rutland
Chestnut, American	Talladega	Arthur Hitt & Scott Stevens	US Forest Service
Cypress, Pond	Baldwin	Dr. Thomas H. Wilson	AL Dept of Conservation & Natural Resources
Dogwood, Flowering	Cleburne	Glenn Berry	Michael & Holly Tolgo
Fringe-tree	Baldwin	Gena Todia	City of Foley
Hackberry, Common	Marshall	Sue White	John & Sue White
Hawthorn, Littlehip	DeKalb	Jason Shelton	DeSoto State Park
Hickory, Nutmeg	Dallas	Dr. Thomas H. Wilson	James Shand
Locust, Honey	Talladega	John Goff & Travis Ford	Headwaters Investments Corporation
Maple, Red	Morgan	Paul Floyd	City of Decatur
Mulberry, Red	Choctaw	Lorenzo Johnson	William J. Scruggs, Sr.
Oak, Chinkapin	Lawrence	Jack Paul	Tennessee Valley Authority
Oak, Darlington	Hale	Tim Washburne	David & Christie Krystofiak
Oak, Northern Red	Marion	Tony Avery	James Ross Markham, Sr.
Oak, Scarlet	Jackson	Jason Shelton	Joshua K. Shelton
Oak, Scarlet (co-champ)	Dallas	Dr. Thomas H. Wilson	James Shand
Pine, Virginia	DeKalb	Jason Shelton	DeSoto State Park
Serviceberry, Downy	DeKalb	Jason Shelton	DeSoto State Park
Sourwood	Marion	Josh Angel & Tony Avery	James Ross Markham, Sr.
Sweetleaf	Marion	Tony Avery	Marshal Rea, Jimmy Rea, & Cherry Gregg
Sycamore	Autauga	Dana O'Brian	David & Dana O'Brian
Willow, Black	Perry	Dr. Thomas H. Wilson	James Essex

Congratulations to all of the nominators and owners of the new champions! For those unfamiliar with Champion Trees, the purpose of the program is to discover, recognize, and preserve the largest of each tree species in Alabama. Anyone can nominate a tree for "Champion Tree" designation by completing an on-line nomination form; however, an Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) forester is responsible for collecting the tree's measurements. Once a new champion is identified, both its owner and nominator receive certificates. The nominator is presented with a permanent tree marker by AFC county personnel that is placed in proximity to the base of the tree.

When determining a champion, three of the tree's components are taken into consideration: circumference, height, and crown spread. The formula used to determine the size of a tree is as follows: one point for each inch of circumference, plus one point for each foot of height, plus one point for each four feet of the average crown spread. For a tree to be eligible for the Champion Tree Program, it must be a species that is recognized as native or naturalized in Alabama. A naturalized tree is an "introduced" species that has established itself in the wild, reproducing naturally and spreading.

If you know of a tree that you think might be the largest of its species in the state, you are encouraged to send in a nomination. To complete a form on-line, visit the AFC website at: www.forestry.alabama.gov and click on the "Informational Resources" link. Due to limited AFC resources, a nominator is asked to review the measurements of the current champion to get an idea if his prospective tree has a chance of defeating the current champion's score before sending in a nomination. After all, there are millions of "big" trees in Alabama, but only one CHAMPION for each species. Nominations may be sent in year round. For a tree to be eligible for Champion Tree designation in 2010, the nomination form must be received by June 1, 2010. To learn more about the Champion Tree Program, visit the AFC's website. ♣