

TREE NEWS

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TENNESSEE CHAMPION TREE PROGRAM

The quest to find the largest trees in America began in 1940 when the nonprofit organization American Forests launched the National Champion Trees program. The program began with the intention of bringing awareness to the ecosystem services, beauty, and need to protect these specimens. During the last 80 years, hundreds of national champion trees have been named, yet the search and data upkeep is an ongoing exercise.

The recognition of Tennessee's champion trees began in the 1970s with efforts to identify and catalog the largest trees in East Tennessee. The program has since expanded to accept nominations from across the entire state, and in 2020, the Tennessee Division of Forestry partnered with the University of Tennessee's Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries to officially host the state's Champion Tree program. A group of urban forestry students is leading the charge.

Tennessee State Forester David Arnold commented, "Partnering with the UT Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries has elevated Tennessee's Champion Tree program to an elite status. The program is now more available and engaging to Tennessee's citizens. Hats off to UT's dedicated students who have made it exciting and fun to learn about our state's biggest individual tree species!"

This hardworking cadre of talented UT students is being trained as tree assessment experts and is taking the lead with key duties: managing the champion tree website and database, vetting new nomination, re-inventory of current champions, and program publicity. This year-round internship provides students with practical and professional skills that will support them as they matriculate through their college careers.

To wrap up their hard work over the past year, the students will host an inaugural Champion Tree Program livestream event to announce the 2021 champions on Monday, September 20! This webinar is free and open to the public, and registration can be found at championtree.tennessee.edu.



CHAMPION TREE LIVESTREAM EVENT

September 20th, 2021
10:30 AM EDT

Join us for the official
announcement of the new
2021 Champion Trees!

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