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Ten of Tarrant's finest trees rated state champions

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These beauties offer shade. They filter the air. And they serve as homes to generations of birds and squirrels. Ten Tarrant County trees are among this year's state champions.

The six Fort Worth trees and four North Richland Hills trees were nominated by residents and environmentalists. They were among more than 100 trees across Texas recently recognized by the College Station-based Texas Forest Service.

Each winner was determined by its height, crown spread and trunk circumference. "Everything's bigger in Texas, and we brag about our trees being so big," said Steve Houser, a consulting arborist from Richardson.

The idea originated in the 1940s with a forester who wanted to protect trees from being cut down, said Courtney Blevins, the Fort Worth representative for the Texas Forest Service. "It's important to recognize the truly remarkable trees and to increase awareness of the urban forest that we live in," Blevins said.

Trees are silent witnesses to the community and history, said Geoffrey Sherman, a North Richland Hills landscape horticulturist.

More than half of Tarrant County's state winners are on public locations. They are maintained by Mother Nature. The rest of the champs sit on private property.

Cindee Ross of Aledo owns Green Mama's Organic Garden Center at 5324 Davis Blvd. in North Richland Hills. She waters her award-winning Chinese privet once a week and tosses organic fertilizers around it three times a year.

"It's just so beautiful and unique. It grows deep-purple berries year-round," Ross said. "As far as nature goes, it's an awesome tree."

STATE CHAMPION TREES IN TARRANT

1. **Mexican buckeye**

Location: Fort Worth Botanic Garden, 3220 Botanic Garden Blvd.]

Height: 23 feet

Trunk circumference: 12 inches

Crown spread*: 18 feet

Significance: Largest of its species in the United States

2. **Gum bumelia**

Location: Trinity Park, 2401 University Drive, Fort Worth

Height: 55 feet
Trunk circumference: 87 inches
Crown spread: 56 feet
Significance: Largest of its species in Texas

3. **Green hawthorne**

Location: Fort Worth Botanic Garden
Height: 38 feet
Trunk circumference: 50 inches
Crown spread: 33 feet
Significance: Largest of its species in Texas

4. **Common jujube**

Location: Fort Worth Botanic Garden
Height: 46 feet
Trunk circumference: 64 inches
Crown spread: 36 feet
Significance: Largest of its species in Texas

5. **Bur oak**

Location: Bryant Irvin Road and Bellaire Drive, Fort Worth
Height: 81 feet
Trunk circumference: 218 inches
Crown spread: 105 feet
Significance: Largest of its species in Texas

6. **Texas red oak**

Location: Ward Parkway and Glenco Terrace, Fort Worth
Height: 70 feet
Trunk circumference: 198 inches
Crown spread: 82 feet
Significance: Largest of its species in the United States
See the photo at the end of this document.

7. **Texas Hercules' club**

Location: Cross Timbers Park, 7680 Douglas Road, North Richland Hills
Height: 41 feet
Trunk circumference: 33 inches
Crown spread: 18 feet
Significance: Largest of its species in Texas

8. **Chinese privet**

Location: Green Mama's Organic Garden Center, 5324 Davis Blvd., North Richland Hills
Height: 23 feet
Trunk circumference: 36 inches
Crown spread: 24 feet
Significance: Largest of its species in Texas

9. **Golden raintree**

Location: Briley and Rufe Snow drives, North Richland Hills Height: 27 feet

Trunk circumference: 58 inches

Crown spread: 35 feet

Significance: Largest of its species in Texas

10. **Chinese parasol**

Location: North Hills Drive and Dent Road, North Richland Hills
Height: 43 feet

Trunk circumference: 76 inches

Crown spread: 47 feet

Significance: Largest of its species in Texas

* Crown spread: Tree at its widest point.

Online: [Texas Tree Trails](#) (DFW Regional) or [Texas Forest Service Big Tree Registry](#) (statewide); Source: Texas Forest Service nelashi@star-telegram.com NOOR ELASHI, 817-685-3854

Courtney Blevins, a regional urban forester, [Fort Worth Office](#), and [Cross Timbers Urban Forestry Council](#), shows the 198-inch circumference of the state and national champion Texas red oak found off Ward Parkway in Fort Worth (see photo on the right). The tree is 70 feet high. (Note the baseball cap at the the tree base.)

STAR-TELEGRAM/LAURIE L. WARD

