



**CITY OF SANTA CRUZ**  
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## **DOWNTOWN SIGNIFICANT TREE WALK**

*Begin at City Hall complex at 809 Center Street at City Manager's office*

### **1) Canary Island date palm *Phoenix canariensis* Arecaceae**



In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Spanish missionaries brought with them the Canary Island Date Palm. It has also been popularly planted with Victorian homes in the early 1900's as seen on Broadway and other Victorian homes in our area. Native to Canary Islands it grows to 60 feet and can be pruned to hold a pineapple like appearance.

2) Cockspur Coral Tree *Erythrina crista-galli* Fabaceae



Native to Brazil, this tree blooms up to three times per year; it is most cold tolerant Coral Tree and is partially deciduous. It generates so much nectar that it is commonly called the “cry baby” tree in Louisiana. *Crista-galli* means cock’s comb referring to the flowers gobble like appearance.

3) Floss Silk Tree *Ceiba speciosa* (*Chorissa*) Malvaceae



Recently moved into the hibiscus family and native to the tropics of South America, with unique spiky bark, silky hairs surrounding the seeds and the flowers are spectacular. *Speciosa* means showy and brilliant. The material within the seed pods is similar to kapok used by the Navy for life vests and by South American Indians for arrow-proof vests. Grows to 60 feet tall and is deciduous. Mature trees bloom in fall and young trees may take a few years to bloom. Avoid water on the trunk to prevent rot.



4) *Jacaranda Jacaranda mimosafolia* Bignoniaceae



Trumpet flower family, native to Brazil and popularly planted from Mexico to Central California. Jacaranda performs best with ample moisture and a dry warm climate with well-draining sandy soils. Jacaranda grows 25-40 feet high with a spread of 15-30 feet. Jacaranda blooming period is from late June into August depending on warm temperatures. New leaves may emerge in spring but if spring temperatures remain cool, Jacaranda branches may remain bare until the tree comes into bloom. Watch for aphids on flowers during the bloom season that can create sticky honeydew that will drip from the tree's flowers.

5) Japanese Cryptomeria *Cryptomeria japonica* Taxodiaceae



Sometimes confused with our native Redwood, this tree is native to the Orient and popularly used in Japanese gardens. The tree can grow quickly when young, slowing as it matures. Ultimately Cryptomeria can grow to 100 feet in height. The bark is reddish and shreds in strips. The cones are at the branch tips and very different looking from our native Coast Redwood. There are several cultivated varieties of this species that can look considerably different from this tree.



6) Flowering Cherry *Prunus serrulata* cv. Rosaceae



Cherry, Plum, Apple, Pear, Almond, Peaches and some of the Laurels are in the rose family. Many *Prunus* are commonly referred to as stone fruits due to their hard nut centers. The flowering Cherry is native to Japan; it grows to a mature height of 30-40 ft. The Kwanzan variety of cherry tree (flower pictured) is one of the hardiest and showiest of all flowering cherry trees. The blossoms of the Kwanzan cherry tree have large pink double bicolor blossoms in clusters of 3-5 flowers per grouping. In Japan there is a common legend that each spring a fairy maiden hovers low in the warm sky, wakening the sleeping Cherry trees to life with her delicate breath. This tree is responsible for the spectacular pink color show each spring in Washington, D.C. People travel from all over the world to see the famous flowering cherries in DC every spring. For this reason the Flowering Cherry was selected for our Pacific Avenue post-earthquake renovations. Due to their urban setting and growing conditions on the mall, this tree looks much happier than the street trees on Pacific Ave. This particular tree was installed almost 20 years ago and relocated here from one of our parks during a playground renovation. Some cherries are grafted up high to create a weeping effect, have special characteristics or a unique trunk. In this case the seedling or root stock is allowed to grow to a height of 5 or so feet, and then the desirable variety is grafted on to the trunk creating an umbrella effect. Foliage originating from below the graft is from the wild rootstock and should be removed.

7) Angel's Trumpet *Brugmansia x candida* Solanaceae Night shade family



Angel's trumpet is a South American native related to Jimson weeds or *Datura*. This plant used to be classified as a *Datura* however it is now separated into genera differentiating them from other *Datura* since they become woody stemmed and tree like with pendulous flowers. Angel's Trumpet is vigorous and a beautiful addition to gardens, attracting Hummingbirds and other pollinators. It is available in single or double trumpet flowers and flowers come in a range of colors from pinks to dark purple yellow and white. The plants are highly poisonous. They contain the alkaloids scopolamine and atropine and have been used throughout history as a poison or a hallucinogen. Usage of this plant and its relatives date back at least 3000 years in both Asia and in the New World; it was used for both medicinally and as a psychoactive plant to induce visionary dreams. People that consume this plant can easily take a potentially fatal dose. It is truly a sacred plant in ancient cultures however should be treated with all the respect it deserves due to its powerful chemical properties.

*Cross Center St. to Greek Church*



8) Lily of the Valley Tree *Crinodendron patagua* Elaeocarpaceae



Native to Chile, this tree is evergreen and a summer bloomer with clusters of small white inconspicuous flowers resembling the lily of the valley bulb. This tree is also called flowering oak due to its resemblance in appearance in form to oak trees.

9) Southern Magnolia *Magnolia grandiflora* Magnoliaceae



There are only a few genera in this family of primitive flowering trees (Angiosperms). This is the classic Southern Magnolia from plantations extending from North Carolina to Texas. It has been in cultivation since 1734. It grows glossy large green leaves and big white fragrant flowers. Surface roots are a problem dictating limited applications in urban settings and they are messy with year round leaf drop. This specimen is close to 100 years old.

Cross Church St., then left on Cedar St. to corner of Cedar & Locust



10) **Katsura Tree** *Cercidiphyllum japonicum* Cercidiphyllaceae



A deciduous tree with excellent fall colors for our climate, from yellows to reds. Male and female flowers are produced on separate trees (dioecious) and are small and red. Male trees are typically single trunked while the females are multi-trunked with spreading branches. These trees are known to have surface roots. Native to Japan and China, it is the only tree in its family.

11) **Ginkgo Tree** *Ginkgo biloba* Ginkgoaceae



An ancient gymnosperm (cone producing plant) tree dating back 200 million years to pre-conifers (Jurassic period) with fused needles but producing a fruit like an angiosperm (flowering plant). Fossil records of their leaves date back 225 million years ago. A geologic relict from Eastern China originally with medicinal usage dating back centuries. Ongoing research continues to determine medical benefits. There are no known Ginkgo trees growing in the wild any more.



12) **Black Walnut** *Juglans nigra* Juglandaceae



This Historic Black Walnut was proposed for removal in 1995 and was ultimately pruned back to a stub for public safety and then allowed to regenerate its existing canopy as seen here. The process of pruning a tree severely and then working with the regenerating canopy to create a new branching structure is termed “crown restoration”. Minor canopy structural pruning occurred in February 2004. Nigra means black. The roots of this genus exude a substance called juglone which is toxic to many landscape plants lessening growth within the drip line of the tree.

13) **Red Oak** *Quercus rubra* Fagaceae



Large family of trees includes Chestnuts, Beech and Oak trees. Native to the Northeastern US this species does well in Santa Cruz. Good sidewalk, lawn or urban tree with deep roots.

14) **Orange Flowering Gum** *Corymbia ficifolia* (*Eucalyptus*) Myrtaceae



Eucalyptus/Corymbia is native to Australia and one of the most popularly planted nonnative trees for use in Western landscapes. This species blooms July and August. Blossom color varies from creams, pink, orange and reds. Trees grow rapidly to 40 feet. Old blossoms should be pruned to lessen the chance of branch failure due to weighting. The flowers are known to produce excellent honey too. *Ficifolia* is the species since the leaves resemble the leaf of a non-edible fig tree.

*Cross Mission St., and proceed uphill on Mission*



15) **Bunya-Bunya** *Araucaria bidwillii* Araucariaceae



This species is native to Australia and has been planted prominently at old estates and at historic structures in California. There are many here in the City of Santa Cruz. This tree is sometimes incorrectly referred to as the Monkey Puzzle tree that is native to Chili. They differ in that the leaves of a Monkey Puzzle are rope like with tighter appearing more uniformly sized leaves. This silly tree name was derived from the large cones that could puzzle a monkey if it were sitting below this tree and a cone was to fall and hit him on the head. These trees are very primitive conifers, bearing 10-15 pound cones. It grows at a moderate rate to 80 feet. The seeds have a high nutritional value and were utilized by the native people of Queensland.



16) Chilean Wine Palm *Jubaea chilensis* Areaceae



Native to Chili, these palms were commonly planted at missions and on historic grounds by the Spanish settlers. There is also a wonderful specimen at Mission Santa Barbara and one here at 418 Locust Street. They grow slowly to 60 feet and shed their fronds cleanly exposing their smooth grey trunks. They require no water once established. Wine has been produced from the dates of this tree in South America.



17) **Date Palm** *Phoenix dactilifera* Arecaceae



Native to the Middle East, Date Palms need heat to produce their dates. There are many commercial growers in the Southern California deserts such as in Indio Co. Male and female flowers form on separate trees so both must be planted to make fruit. Two trees were transplanted around 2003 from the old Gateways Book store that was located at 1010 Pacific Ave. One perished and this one has been slow to establish but have made it through the first few years here in its new home. Native people were known to intentionally burn the trunks to encourage greater date production.

18) Basswood/Linden *Tilia spp.* Malvaceae



Little and Big Leaf Lindens are a very popular tree in England and other parts of Europe. The American Linden or Basswood is native to New England and the Midwest. Linden flowers, leaves, wood, and charcoal can be used for medicinal purposes for treating colds, cough, fever, infections, headache, inflammation, high blood pressure, digestive problems, as a diuretic, and a sedative. They are also treasured for their wood, fragrant flowers and their shape and form. Lindens are a favorite for bees as the nectar from its flowers make a very high quality honey. The outer wood is both lightweight and odorless and is used for food packing boxes and crates. The inner wood is very tough and the Native Americans cut it into thin strips and used it for rope, mats, and even bandages. Wood carvers use it currently for crafting Basswood boxes, trays, and clock faces. These deciduous trees can sometimes get aphids leading to sooty mold and drippy honeydew. The *Tilia* family has been merged with Malvaceae.



19) Dawn Redwood *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* Taxodiaceae



The Dawn Redwood is closely related to our native Coast Redwood but smaller and very different. The foliage and cones appear similar however this tree will lose all its leaves in the winter (deciduous). These trees were thought to be extinct but specimens were found growing in remote areas of China during the 1940s. They are being reintroduced into the trade and for use in landscapes as they are beautiful and well adapted to our area. Santa Cruz has many specimens in parks and in private gardens. They grow rapidly when young and the rate of growth slows as they mature. They grow much smaller than their cousin our redwood, to just over a hundred feet or so. The species is named after *Glyptostrobus* the genus for Chinese Swamp Cypress, since they look like (*oides*) this tree, and *Meta* from the Greek, "beyond" or "with" is combined with *Sequoia* and is used in English to indicate a different concept. A plant's Latin name will sometimes help provide us with clues and guide us to a description of a particular tree's unique characteristics.

20) **Copper Beech** *Fagus sylvatica* 'Atropuncea' Fagaceae



Beech trees are related to Oaks & Chestnuts. The small fruits located at branch tips resembled the edible chestnuts. Beech trees produce beechnuts (the genus name *Fagus* is Latin meaning “to eat” as their fruit is a very important food source for many animals. Unlike oaks & chestnut, the bark of Beech is smooth and has an elephant skin like appearance.

21) **Deodar Cedar** *Cedrus deodara* Pinaceae



Cedars are in the Pine family. True cedars have needles and are among the most popularly planted conifers. There are other trees termed Cedar but they are not true Cedars by classification, they are in other genera, trees such as Western Red Cedar or Incense Cedar. Cedars are deep rooted and good landscape trees. Deodars are native to the Himalayas and grow to about 80 feet with wide branching structure.



22) Coast Redwood *Sequoia sempervirens* Taxodiaceae



This tree is also seen on Union St. and in front of the City of Santa Cruz Law Offices. Our prized native, its endemic distribution is a 450-mile strip along the Pacific Coast of North America, beginning in southern Oregon and ending just south of Monterey to an elevation of 2000 feet. *Sequoia* -- from the Cherokee Indian chief Sequoyah, *sempervirens*-- from the Latin meaning "always green" The coast redwood has only two close relatives. The shorter but more massive giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) growing only in California's Sierra Nevada Mountains, and the deciduous dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*), a veritable midget at 115 feet in height, is found native only in a remote area of central China and planted here in Mission Plaza Park and also at Harvey West Park. Redwoods prosper in our mild climate zone, where winter rains and summer fog provide an even temperature and a high level of year-round moisture. The oldest verified redwood tree is at least 2,200 years of age, but foresters believe that some may be much older. The coast redwoods are the tallest living species on Earth. Often they can reach heights of 300-350 feet and diameters of 16-18 feet. More than a dozen trees exceeding 360 feet in height are now growing along the California coast. Redwoods are also renowned for their extremely high volume of standing biomass, in some stands exceeding 3,500 metric tons per hectare; a California native tree we can be proud of!!

23) Star/Norfolk Island Pine *Araucaria heterophylla* Araucariaceae



Related to the Bunya Bunya we saw earlier, the star pine is commonly sold as a houseplant or Christmas tree in the nursery trade. It has pronounced star-like new growth. This tree is native to Norfolk Island near Australia. It has moderate growth to 100 feet and can spread to 50 feet width. The cones are similar to the Monkey Puzzle or Bunya Bunya trees but significantly smaller in size. The first European known to have sighted Norfolk Island was Captain James Cook, in 1774 on his second voyage to the South Pacific. Cook noted the presence of large quantities of tall, straight trees which appeared to be suitable for use as masts and yards for sailing ships. However ultimately it was found that Norfolk Island Pine was not resilient enough for ship applications.

*Head east down Walnut Ave.*



24) London Plane Tree *Platanus x hispanica (acerifolia)* Platanaceae



A European relative of our native sycamore, this species is the most popularly planted street tree in California and potentially worldwide. It grows rapidly creating tree lined street aesthetics as seen here on Walnut Ave. and along the downtown mall. It is tolerant of harsh urban conditions such as smog, reflected heat, dust, vandalism and poor environmental conditions. Plat means flat in Latin and *acerifolia* refers to the foliage resembling a maple tree. The species name was recently changed as the first trees were known to be discovered in Spain. Disease problems include mildew and anthracnose however newer cultivated varieties have been hybridized to limit these planting concerns. The small hairs on the backside of leaves and also spores from the fungus that can grow on leaves can create allergies and irritations of lungs. The wood from this tree species is growing in popularity for wood crafting. As one gets closer to the center of the trunk wood, sawing vertically first then horizontally, the wood grains that are revealed are stunning. The wood emerges from the saw blade dark red, with swirls of creamy flecks and a unique speckled pattern.

*Proceed down Walnut Ave., then turn right on Cedar Street to Calvary Episcopal Church*

25) **Douglas Fir** *Pseudotsuga menziesii* Pinaceae



Douglas Fir are another native tree in our area. Not a true Fir, its cones hang downward rather than pointing upwards. Initially the tree was classified as a fir, *Abies* but was changed in genus as it was found to be more closely related to other trees. Since pioneer days, Douglas fir has provided lumber for homes and other buildings for much of the northern part of the country but is now surpassed by the lumber of other conifers. It is common in the Pacific North West into California's coastal ranges Douglas Fir reach nearly 300 feet tall with an 8-10 foot trunk, they are long lived trees. These trees are capable of growing to 700 years old but there are reports of trees more than 1,300 years old. Trees are sheared commonly into Christmas trees for commercial production. This specimen is probably close to 100 years old and has been well cared for by the church for public safety. Notice the cables that have been installed and maintained guiding the tree's many leaders to move as a single unit.



**Thank you for sharing your  
morning with the City of Santa Cruz  
Parks & Recreation Department, we  
hope you have enjoyed your tree  
tour!!!!**

**Please contact the City of Santa Cruz  
Urban Forester at 420-5246 if you would  
like to discuss our Community's trees!!!!**

**Sincerely,**

**Leslie Keedy**

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