

BIG TREES

Large trees are amazing. They are old, majestic and beautiful. Not only have they witnessed history, but they have survived storms, droughts, climate change, pests and disease. They are marvels. The American Forest Organization maintains a registry of these trees. They are called Champion Trees. They are the biggest trees of their species in the country. The State of New Jersey maintains its' own database of Big Trees. There are 184 State Champions, of which 9 are National Champions.

Trees are nominated and then measured to determine if they are in fact, the biggest tree of their species. They are measured using a 3-point formula that takes into consideration the height, circumference and the canopy, or crown spread. Each measurement is given points and they are calculated together to reach a total value. New Jersey's 3 largest trees using the point system are the Swamp Oak in Burlington County (399 points), the White Ash tree in Morris County (398 points) and the Sweetgum tree in Burlington County (388 points). Westfield boasts the largest Northern Red Oak in the state with 260 points. It is 95 feet tall, has a 12- foot circumference, and a canopy of over 86 feet.

The largest trees in the country and in the world can be found in California. They are Giant Sequoias and grow in the Sequoia National Park. The biggest tree, nicknamed the General Sherman Tree, has 1533 points. It is 275 feet tall with a circumference of about 108 feet. The world's tallest tree is also a Giant Sequoia nicknamed Hyperion with a value of 1290 points. The tree with the largest crown spread in the US is in Georgia. It is a Live Oak tree with 558 points.

These trees have both historical value and conservational value because they provide more ecological benefits than typical trees. They are super trees. The goal of noting Big Trees in registries is to insure that care is taken to preserve them for future generations.



Sequoia National Park

