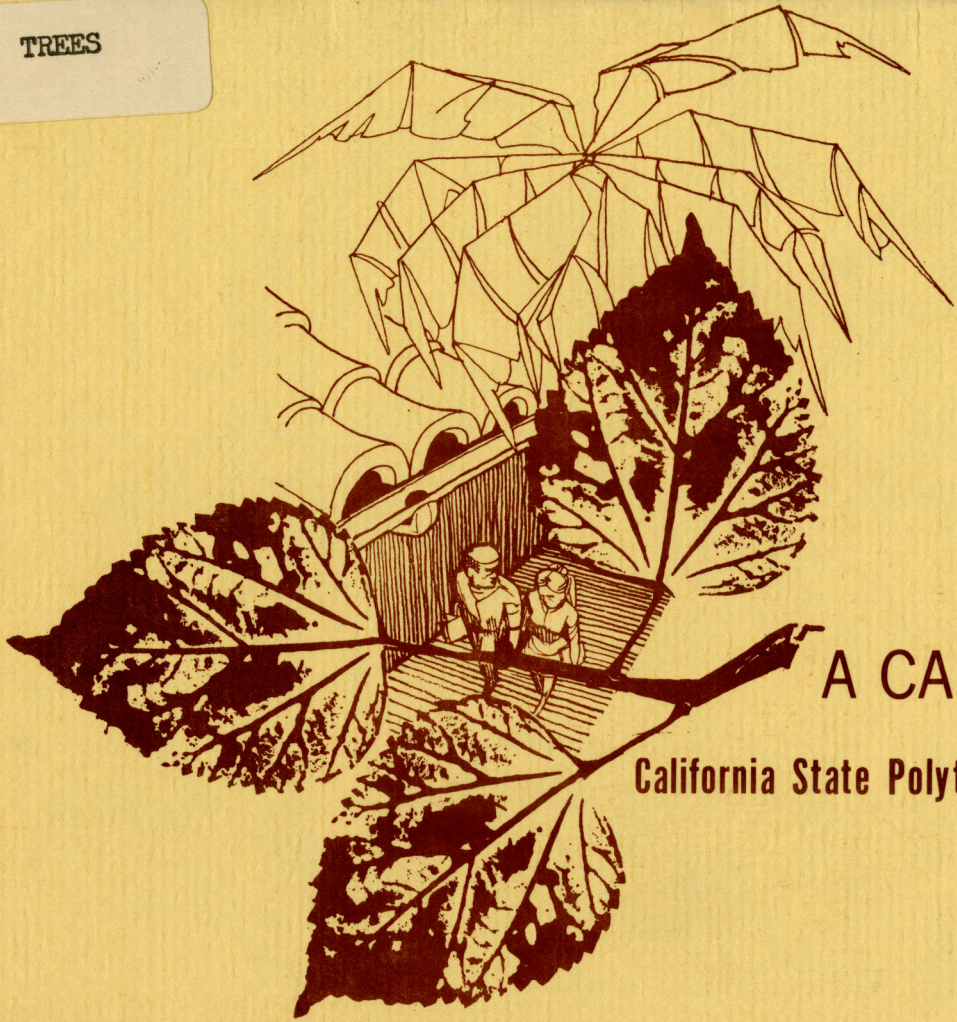
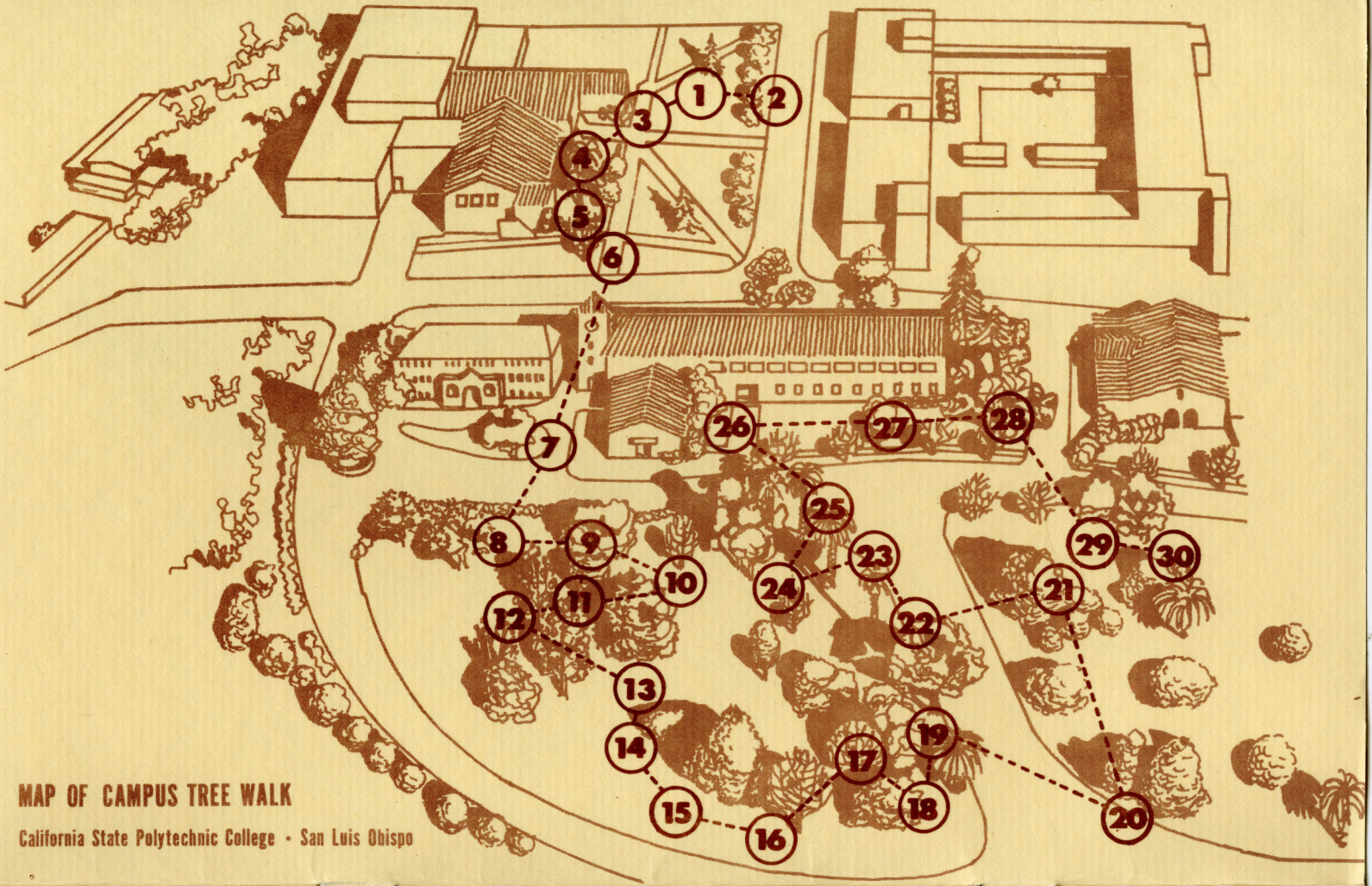


# A CAMPUS TREE WALK

California State Polytechnic College San Luis Obispo




# MAP OF CAMPUS TREE WALK

California State Polytechnic College • San Luis Obispo

# A CAMPUS TREE WALK

California State Polytechnic College San Luis Obispo

Adapted from a longer tour developed in mid-1967 as a senior thesis project in ornamental horticulture by Robert Everett, A Campus Tree Walk presents a few of the numerous beautiful and interesting trees which grace the campus of Cal Poly. It is hoped that they are shown in a manner which will make it possible for campus guests, as well as tourists who may be in the area, to enjoy a short and informational walk.

Those taking the walk will find that the trees are labeled with their botanical names listed first (a few have variety names on the second line shown in single quotation marks) followed by the common name and finally the origin of the species. Plants selected from the longer tour for inclusion in this booklet are listed in numerical order with the botanical names shown first, the common name next, a letter "N" or "S" which indicates the location of the label on or near the tree, and the approximate date of planting in parenthesis. Information about each tree is also included. The letter "N" indicates that the label for the tree is nailed directly to the tree, while the letter "S" indicates that the label is attached to a stake in the ground near the base of the tree.

Major instructional buildings of the college which are adjacent to the tour include Dexter Memorial Library, Engineering West, and the Business Administration and Education Building. All are open during normal operating hours and may be visited.

This tour has been developed as one of a series of such tours which are presently or will soon be available for visitors to Cal Poly. Information on other such tours may be obtained either in person or by telephoning the college Information Desk (546-0111) or the Public Information Office (546-2246).

## The Tour

1. Sequoia sempervirens (Coast Redwood) N(1951)---

This majestic tree is native to the Northern California and Oregon Coast ranges. Reaching to 340 feet at maturity, this species includes the tallest trees in the world. Some are thought to be about 3,500 years old, exceeded in age only by the Bristlecone Pine and Giant Redwood. Like most conifers, the Coast Redwood bears male and female cones on the same tree. The male, or staminate, cones appear at the tips of the branchlets from February to April, and are much smaller than the female, or ovulate, cones. This tree differs from the Giant Redwood (S. gigantea) in that it grows straighter and more symmetrical and in moist coastal conditions. Evergreen.

2. Prunus blireiana (Blireiana Plum) N(1947)---

This dark, strong-growing plum is believed to be a horticultural hybrid from a cross of Prunus cerasifera 'Atropurpurea' (Purple-Leaved Myrobalan Plum) and Prunus mume (Japanese Apricot). The former species mentioned can be seen at the end of this row of plums, to your left. The Blireiana Plum is a smaller, wider-spreading tree with a greenish tinge to the leaves in the late summer. This tree is valuable because of its prolific pink and white flowers in the spring and as a small street tree. Deciduous.

3. Eriobotrya japonica (Loquat) S(1947)---

Large tropical-looking leaves make this small tree a valuable ornamental. It can be used bery successfully as an espalier. It produces small, yellow, pear-shaped edible fruit which ripens in winter and early spring. The fruit is used in making jellies, preserves, and pies. Evergreen.

4. Strelitzia nicolai (Giant Bird of Paradise) S(1947)---

A trunk-forming, clustering tree 15 to 25 feet high with banana-like, shiny, green, leathery leaves, 4 feet long and 2 feet wide. Its much smaller relative, the Bird of Paradise (Strelitzia reginae), can be seen at the top of the steps behind you. The flower consists of boat-shaped, reddish bracts to 15 inches long, cradling white flowers with a blue tongue. At the time the flowers open, the bracts are filled with a gummy secretion. Used mainly in tropical plantings as you see here.

5. Arecastrum romanzoffianum (Queen Palm) S(1947)---

A handsome ornamental palm with a tall, smooth trunk, gray-ridged with leaf scars and visible growth rings. It has a graceful crown of long arching, plumy fronds and may reach a height of 40 feet. The flowering clusters produce fruit with sweet-tasting orange pulp. The inside seed, suggestions of a tiny coconut, sometimes called "Monkey Nut," is used for leis and earrings.

6. Schinus terebinthifolius (Brazil Peppertree) S(1947)---

This tree shows the gnarled and twisted trunk form typical of an older tree of this species. It has the same pungent peppery smell of the common pepper tree. One can see by viewing its graceful hanging branches with filmy leaves, dark above and lighter below, why this is a popular ornamental shade tree. Small flowers appear in summer in greenish-yellow clusters. Bright red berrylike fruit forms in the fall and lasts until January and is often used for Christmas decorations, adding to its value. Evergreen.

7. Fraxinus velutina (Arizona Ash) S(1903)---

This medium size shade tree, native to Arizona and New Mexico, reaches a maximum height of 50 feet. Its compound leaves consist of three to five leaflets. The inconspicuous flowers without petals develop in the early spring before the leaves come out. Used in street and shade tree plantings, it is one of the original plantings on the campus. Deciduous.

8. Ulmus americana (American Elm) N(1953)---

Also known as the White, Gray, Water, or Swamp Elm, this large, graceful tree attains a height of 75 to 100 feet at maturity. It was purchased from Kansas by Cal Poly in 1950, but it had to be kept in isolation in a nursery in Oregon for two years and then on the campus for a year before it could be planted here. This was to be sure it was free of Dutch Elm Disease, a very serious disease which killed nearly all the elms in some Eastern states. This tree is estimated to have a spread of over 70 feet and has the typical round, symmetrical crown with drooping branches. The bark becomes a dark ashy-gray in the winter. Deciduous.

9. Salix babylonica (Weeping Willow) N(1952)---

This dense, pendulous branching tree has long, narrow, toothed leaves, and may reach a height of from 30 to 70 feet. The flowers, in the form of catkins, can be seen in the spring. As one can see, in the spring and summer this can be a valuable ornamental shade tree for landscape purposes. Deciduous.

10. Acer saccharinum (Silver Maple) N(1950)---

The seed for this tree was obtained from the St. Louis Botanical Garden, St. Louis, Mo. This species is sometimes known to reach 100 feet in height. It attains its maximum development in the Ohio River Valley. The long, slender, lateral branches which sweep downward and then gracefully curve upward at their tips are characteristic of this species of maple. The silvery-white color on the underside of the leaves gives it its common name. It is extensively used as a street and shade tree in landscaping. Deciduous.

11. Crataegus oxyancantha (English Hawthorn) N(1920's)---

This small tree is one of the oldest trees in this lawn area. It is characterized by its dense mat of scarlet flowers in the spring and bright red berries in the fall. Several varieties of this species have been cultivated, including white and double-flowered types. It is valuable as a street tree. Deciduous.

12. Alnus rhombifolia (Sierra Alder) N(1949)---

This tree with its slender, gray, double trunk was planted from a one-gallon can. It is a native of the Pacific Northwest where it thrives best near streams and creeks. Also called the White Alder, it forms two types of catkins: long, slender, pollen-bearing (male) and small cone-like, seed-bearing (female). It is known to grow to a height of over 100 feet, and is used for shade and avenue plantings and park specimens. Deciduous.

13. Quercus cerris (Turkey Oak) N(1947)---

This unusual looking oak tree with its lobed leaves is one of many species of oaks known. This one may grow to 100 feet tall. Commonly used as a shade tree, street tree, or park specimen. Normally deciduous but has remained evergreen in this area.

14. Myoporum laetum (Myoporum) N(1947)---

This plant is often grown as a shrub. Here, however, we see that the spreading limbs make for an interesting small tree. A characteristic of the Myoporum is the transluscent, glandular dots in the leaves which can be seen when the leaf is held up to the sun. The white, bell-shaped flowers can be seen amongst the foliage in the early summer, followed by the small, dark red berries. This is a rapid-growing plant used as a hedge, screen, or background in landscaping. Evergreen.

15. Betula verrucosa (European White Birch) N(1903)---

Believed to be among the original plantings on the campus, this is a graceful tree, forming a slender pyramid of pendulous white-barked branches. Also known as B. pendula or B. alba. The white bark peels off in layers and the leaves turn a clear yellow in the fall. The male catkins show in the autumn, remain naked during the winter, and open in the spring, while the female flowers are cone-like with three-lobed scales. Often used in group planting. Deciduous.

16. Acer negundo (Boxelder) N(1947)---

Also called the Ash-Leaved Maple, this tree is unique in the maple family in that it has pinnately-compound leaves with three or five leaflets. As can be seen by this specimen, the trunk commonly divides into several stout, wide-spreading branches forming a rather open, unsymmetrical, rounded crown. The fruit is the typical maple "winged samaras" which ripens in late summer. Used as a shade or park specimen tree in landscaping. Attains a height of 70 feet at maturity. Deciduous.

17. Liriodendron tulipifera (Tulip Tree) N(1954)---

Also known as Whitewood in the East, this tree is a member of the magnolia family, and grows anywhere from 60 to 150 feet high. It has a straight pyramidal form, with branching starting several feet from the ground as seen here. A major characteristic is its large four-lobed leaves and magnolia-like, greenish-yellow flowers with orange spots at the base. The flowers appear in late May or June. The leaves turn orange-yellow in fall. Valuable ornamental. Deciduous.

18. Salix babylonica 'Crispa' (Ringleaf Willow) N(1947)---

This tree, a variety of the Weeping Willow (see No. 9), has the same drooping effect but is characterized by its curved ring-like leaves which give it its common name. It has easily reached its mature height of 30 feet. Used mainly as a specimen tree in landscaping. Deciduous.

19. Eucalyptus globulus 'Compacta' (Dwarf Bluegum) N(1947)---

This is a dwarf variety of the common bluegum. It is very dense-branching and much shorter (reaching a height of 40 feet) and formal-looking tree than the bluegum. It is one of the most interesting looking trees on campus. Used for shade, screen, specimen (as here) or windbreak. Evergreen.

20. Lagunaria patersonii (Sugar Plum Tree) N(1903)---

This tree, considered by professionals as an excellent looking specimen of this species, is characterized by its mass of rosy pink flowers in the summer and compact pyramid form. This full grown specimen has easily reached its ultimate height of 40 feet. It was also among the original plantings on campus. Used mainly as a specimen planting in parks and gardens. Evergreen.

21. Quercus agrifolia (California Liveoak) S(1903?)---

This large, noble-looking tree was among the original plantings on campus or perhaps before. This species of oak is the best-known in California. It is known for its wide-spreading branches which provide dense shade. It has small, spiny-toothed leaves and reaches a height of 100 feet. The bark is rough and black and the acorns are partly enclosed by a silky cup. Evergreen.

22. Washingtonia robusta (Mexican Fan Palm) N(1910)---

Also called Thread Palm because of the thread-like filament around the outside of the fan-shaped leaves. As one can see, the upper part, which may be over 100 feet from the ground, is dense with living, bright green leaves and brown, dead foliage forming a skirt. The plaited leaves are stiff and slightly cut. The fruit is black-brown. Used as an accent plant in landscaping.

23. Erythea armata (Big Blue Hesper Palm) N(1910)---

This palm is characterized by its waxy blue, palmate fronds in a crown at the top. The stout trunk is naturally covered by a dense petticoat of dead leaves. The long spadix (fruiting bodies) extending beyond the leaves gives a handsome appearance to this 40-foot palm.

24. Jubaea chilensis (Wine Palm) N(1910)---

Also called the Syrup Palm because its sap yields a syrup, this palm has a distinctive swollen trunk which may be several feet thick as this one is. At maturity it will be from 40 to 80 feet tall, with spreading pinnate fronds 6 to 12 feet long. In Chile, sugar or honey is made from the sap, and the nuts are used in confectionery.

25. Phoenix canariensis (Canary Island Datepalm) N(1910)---

This is one of the hardiest palms and has become widespread as a cultivated plant. It is a strong tree, growing to 50 or 60 feet with leaves 15 to 20 feet long. Leafstalks are usually persistent on the stout trunk. As can be seen, the leaves are rich green in color and curve attractively, the older ones hanging downward. Fruiting clusters often are drooping, the fruit is yellowish-red, egg-shaped or rounded. An excellent example of the value of this species as an avenue tree is the planting on both sides of California Boulevard as you enter the campus.

26. Oreopanax nymphaeifolius (Oreopanax) N(1943)---

This specimen is considered to be one of the outstanding examples of this species in the United States. It is a small, clean, attractive tree and a member of the ivy family (Araliaceae). The leaves are dark green ovate and leathery in texture. It is valuable as a tub specimen and perhaps as a street tree in landscaping. Evergreen.

27. Fraxinus velutina 'Modesto' (Modesto Ash) N(1948)---

These trees, along College Avenue, were originally planted from single 6-foot whips. A few have been replaced because of severe wind damage, due to the weak branching habit of the Ash. This variety is cultivated more than the Arizona Ash (see No. 7) because of its better growth and vigor and darker green foliage. It is a slightly smaller tree with a narrower, more upright habit than the Arizona Ash. Its landscape values are similar, but because of its smaller size can be used in backyards for shade. Deciduous.

28. Pinus canariensis (Canary Island Pine) S(1903)---

This beautiful pine, one of the oldest trees on campus, is a good 80 feet tall. It has the typical rich green needles on the new growth in sets of three per sheath. The yellowish-orange male catkins give this majestic tree a handsomely-decorated appearance in the spring. The cones are cylindrical-ovoid up to eight inches long. Its landscape value is mainly as an accent tree or a specimen. Evergreen.

29. Cupressus funebris (Funeral Cypress) N(1903)---

Also called the Mourning Cypress because of its drooping branches and flattened branchlets. Some are known to grow to a height of 60 feet. A member of the numerous and variable cypress family, this species is most valuable as a specimen plant and screen in landscaping. The small cones grow to a size of one half inch. Evergreen.

30. Araucaria bidwilli (Bunya Bunya) N(1903)---

This interesting looking tree, mistakenly known as the Monkey-Puzzle Tree, may grow up to 150 feet high with a pyramidal shape. The glossy needles with parallel depressed veining are mostly arranged in two flat rows and have sharp points. The fruit is a heavy, pineapple-like cone which may weigh 10 pounds. Mostly used as a specimen tree in parks and gardens. Evergreen.