

City of Folsom

TREE

IDENTIFICATION REFERENCE HANDBOOK



*"Helping us identify our
natural resources, so they
can be better managed,
cared for, protected, and
replaced as required - To
protect our citizens,
properties, assets,
and environment"*

Funded by:
Cal Fire Grant,
Volunteer Labor and
City of Folsom Tree Mitigation Fund
For Folsom "Street Tree"
Inventory and Assessment
By Folsom City Arborist



Distinctive by Nature
2011

City of Folsom

Tree

Identification Reference

Handbook

Published 2011 by the City of Folsom

The intent of this handbook is to identify and share information about the trees that are currently located in our area and also the benefit of adding diversity to urban forest population. The City of Folsom suggests many other trees that are quite suitable for this environment.

This tree identification handbook is NOT copyrighted and all parts of it may be copied or used by anyone to help improve our city and extend our local area urban forest.

FORWARD

Here in Folsom, like in many cities across the United States, we have had a list of trees which are the most frequently sold and planted, since they generally are the most asked for and theoretically do the best in our local environment. The species of trees planted change like clothing fashions, so you can look back and see what trees were popular and almost be able to date a property by the "in-Vogue" tree(s) of that time period. When a tree becomes the popular selection it tends to be (over) planted in mass by developers and homeowners alike. The short-term solution frequently becomes the long-term problem. When a high density of similar trees (or trees that have the exact same DNA) are planted in a commercial development, a subdivision, project, or city, these trees become more

vulnerable to diseases, pests, or the same environmental issues (i.e. drought).

One hundred years ago the local residents of Folsom and the central valley of California weren't too concerned with the need for water, as it was plentiful. Today we have had water rationing for homes, business and lots of concerns and rising costs in the entire western states. If we are still in the growth projection curve to double the population of the state in 50 to 100 years, then we will have a huge water shortfall for farming, lawns, gardens, and trees. We cannot ignore the future by what we have today. Many of the trees in historic Folsom have been there for over 100-150 years and hopefully most of the trees that we have planted and will soon plant will be here in another 100+ years. Many of the oaks and other species should live for 200-500 years, so we must be exceedingly thoughtful what trees are selected to go in the right location.

This guide will help you see some of the simplest ways to identify most of our local trees. The City of Folsom was fortunate to receive a grant from Cal Fire (California Department of Forestry) to inventory our "street trees", and with the approval of the City Council, plus volunteer labor donations we are matching the state grant, so that we can better manage our trees, which make up our urban forest. This way we can potentially reduce liabilities, by planting new species in the correct locations, increasing the diversity, avert accidents, protect infrastructure, and save our citizenry more often from harm and expense caused by trees. The "*right trees in the right place*" has long been the mantra of SMUD and the other electrical utility companies nationwide and if we continue with this charge then our trees and urban forest will become a more revered and affordable asset.

PREFACE

Tree identification books are prevalent and not always relevant. Tree identification books are usually published to make a profit, so the writer and publisher want it to not be so limited by geography and climate. The Folsom climate is special and therefore this handbook is especially suited for this specific small zone. It may also be fairly reliable for the rest of Sacramento County, plus parts of Yolo, Placer, San Joaquin, and Eldorado counties, but the further you go away from Folsom...the less it is like our Folsom climate.

I am thankful for those who have paved my way to do this project. Gail Furness de Pardo who

gave me a lot of insight into short and long-term planning here in Folsom, Joe Benassini the first Folsom City Arborist, the Folsom City Council who saw the value of having a City Arborist and supported the Tree Inventory Grant, the Friends of Folsom Parkways for their continued true grit, the Sacramento Tree Foundation for always keeping the spirit of "community" securely linked to the trees, and David Miller who helped me secure a highly efficient assistant: Terrie Ward who really made all of this Folsom tree identification information come together and simplify it for everyone's use.

USAGE OF THIS HANDBOOK

There are 2 charts included with this Handbook to help you see the quick and simple methodology for tree identification in our area. The simpler "Genus" chart bound into the end of the book will show you the right path to get from your unknown tree to the right genus (which is a huge starting point). The detailed "Tree ID" chart for species and some cultivar names may get you all the way, as you start to know your tree's correct identification with the common and botanical names, and see the important difference between cultivars.

The trees on the detailed "Tree ID" chart that are commonly found in Folsom are highlighted in **YELLOW**, the tree name highlighted in **GREEN** has been found, but is not very common, the tree name highlighted in **BLUE** has not been seen in Folsom (hopefully that will change), but should do well in Folsom. Tree names that are highlighted in **PINK** are problem trees that are **NOT** recommended to be planted in Folsom, as they have too many problematic issues (diseases, surface roots, pests, poor structure, etc.).

TREE IDENTIFICATION

Start with the four tree divisions (Broadleaf, Needles, Palm, and Scale), which should be relatively easy and work your way down the chart with simple selection of standard traits.

TREE SELECTION & USAGE

This guide is intended more for identification, but it can also help you select a proper tree or the right location for trees when used in concert with the Folsom Master Tree List. There are a lot of variability's to contend with for any trees, as no two owner's care, two locations, or two soil types are the same. We have to use this guide along with best judgment to select the right tree for the right place by thinking as best possible for short and long-term plans. The soil

in Folsom has some advantages and nightmares with heavy clay, cobbles, and shale deposits that may have been moved by miners or trampled by cattle.

Tree Names and Nomenclature

It may seem easiest and much simpler if this Handbook used the tree's common names, rather than botanical names. Here is an example of why common names are not used (as you will see they are "common", over-used, confusing, repetitive, locally variable, and not for international language:

Oaks are in the genus *Quercus*

Pin Oak, *Quercus palustris* also know as (aka): Water Oak

Water Oak, *Quercus nigra* aka: Pin Oak or Red Oak

Valley Oak, *Quercus lobata* aka: White Oak or Water Oak

Willow Oak, *Quercus phellos* aka: Pin Oak or Black Oak

Black Oak, *Quercus velutina* aka: Yellow Oak

California Black Oak, *Quercus kelloggii* aka: Black Oak

Scarlet Oak, *Quercus coccinea* aka Black Oak

Chinquapin Oak, *Quercus muehlenbergii* aka Yellow Oak,

Chestnut Oak, or Rock Oak

Chestnut Oak, *Quercus prinus* aka Rock Oak

and...

Silk Oak, *Grevillea robusta* (not an oak in the *Quercus* genus)

She-Oak, *Casuarina stricta* (not an oak in the *Quercus* genus)

Poison Oak, *Toxicodendron diversilobum* (not *Quercus*)

Opinion

This list of trees in this Handbook are based upon years taking classes, teaching classes, research, and personal observations. In the tree world I have found that there always seems to be a tree or a condition that makes "arborists" be proven wrong. The list and attributes are taken from many different tree identification books and from what I have seen, especially here in Folsom. This list and collection of tree "facts" are based a lot on what I have observed and read, but then I have adjusted them to our local conditions based upon what I have observed and my opinion. The same species of cultivar of a tree may mature differently in other parts of our county, within California, and in other states.

**Ken Menzer, Folsom City Arborist
Folsom, California**