



Native & Drought Tolerant Tree List



This list contains native and drought tolerant trees approved for planting in South Pasadena.

When planting a tree, remember to plant it with the mature tree in mind.

#	Tree Name (Common & Scientific)	Size	Deciduous Evergreen	Water Needs	Blooms Bloom Season	Native	Maintenance & Comments
1	Fruitless Olive Tree - Olea europaea 'Majestic Beauty'	15-30' h x 15-30' w	E	Low	Not significant N/A	No	Long lived. Works well as a screen.
2	Shoestring Acacia Acacia stenophylla	20-30' h x 10-20' w	E	Low	Pale Yellow Spring or Fall	No	Showy, fragrant flowers. Not long lived. Large, brown fruit spring thru fall.
3	Incense Cedar Calocedrus decurrens	70-90' h x 10-15' w	E	Low	Not significant Summer & Fall	No	Small flowers in spring. Pine cones in summer thru fall. Long lived.
4	Fruitless Sweetgum Liquidambar styraciflua 'Rotundiloba'	50-70' h x 20-25' w	D	Moderate	Not significant N/A	No	This vareity has no seed balls. Low maintenance. Good in lawns. Don't plant near sidewalk, curb or water line.
5	Golden Trumpet Tree Tabebuia chrysotricha	25-50' h x 25-50' w	D	Moderate	Golden yellow Spring	No	Also comes in a lavendar variety. Good substitute for Jacaranda.
6	Willow Pittosporum Pittosporum phillyraeoides	15-25' h x 10-15' w	E	Low-Mod.	Yellow Winter&Spring	No	Low maintenance. Stake young tree. Prolific fruit capsules. Tolerates heat. Good hedge.
7	Pink Trumpet Tree Tabebuia impetiginosa	25-30' h x 25-30' w	D	Moderate	White to lite pink Winter&Spring	No	Showy flowers. Best as a single trunk in the parkway.
8	Chinese Hackberry Celtis sinensis	40-60' h x 30-35' w	D	Low	Not significant Spring&Fall	No	Fast growing. Long lived. Small fruit in Fall. Good subsitute for Chinese Elm.
9	California Bay Laurel Umbellularia californica	12-40' h x 12-40' w	E	Low	Yellow Spring	Yes	Prune as single leader. Pungent foliage.
10	Desert Willow Chilopsis linearis	25' h x 15' w	D	Low	Pink, rose or white Spring & Summer	Yes	Fast growing. Showy flowers. Brown fruit in fall.
11	'Pink Dawn' or 'Morning Cloud' Chitalpa tashkentensis	25-23' h x 25' w	D	Low-Mod.	Pink Spring thru Fall	No	Showy flowers. Large, brown fruit in fall invites wildlife.
12	Chinese Fringe Tree Chionanthus retusus	15-20' h x 10-15' w	D	Moderate	White+Prple fruit Spring & Fall	No	Low maintenance. Purple fruit on female trees during the Fall. Attractive exfoliating bark.
13	Paperbark Tree Melaleuca quinquenervia	20-40' h x 15-25' w	E	Low-Mod.	White or Pink Summer&Fall	No	Best when pruned as a multi-trunked tree. Has thorns.

"Someone's sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago." - Warren Buffett

Updated: 03/19/2025

#	Tree Name (Common & Scientific)	Size	Deciduous Evergreen	Water Needs	Blooms Bloom Season	Native	Maintenance & Comments
14	Australian Bottle Tree Brachychitons	30-40' h x 30' w	E	Low-Mod.	White Late spring	No	Low maintenance. Mature trees trunk tapers like a coke bottle. Seed pods drop.
15	Blue Palo Verde Parkinsonia florida	25-35' h x 25-30' w	E - D	Low	Yellow Spring	No	Flower and seed pod drop. Cultivated variety.
16	Desert Museum Palo Verde Cercidium x 'Desert Museum'	25' h x 25' w	E - D	Low	Yellow Spring & Summer	No	Do not overwater. Fast growing. No thorns.
17	African Sumac Rhus lancea	20-30' h x 20-35' w	E	Low-Mod.	White-green (F. only) Spring & Summer	No	Prune sucker growth. Can be trained as a multi or single trunk tree. Reddish fruits.
18	Australian Willow Geijera parviflora	25-30' h x 20' w	E	Low	Small white clusters Spring & Fall	No	Weeping branches & narrow willow-like leaves.
19	Flaxleaf Paperbark Melaleuca linarifolia	20-30' h x 20-25' w	E	Low	Small white Summer	No	Very little maintenance, may prune to show off trunk bark. Very drought tolerant.
20	Chinese Pistache Pistacia chinensis	30-50' h x 30-40' w	D	Low-Mod.	Red or purple fruit (F. only)/Summer	No	Good fall foliage.
21	California Sycamore Platanus racemosa	30-80' h x 20-50' w	D	Moderate	Not significant	Yes	Easy to establish. Needs wide parkway or space. Drops lots of leaves & seed balls.
22	Blue Atlas Cedar Cedrus atlantica	40-60' h x 25-40' w	E	Low-Mod.	Not significant	No	Low maintenance. Needs wide parkway. Drought tolerant once established.
23	Crape Myrtle Lagerstroemia indica	15-25' h x 6-15' w	D	Low-Mod.	Pink, Red, Lav. & Wht/Summer	No	Good under utilities. Nice bark. Showy flowers.
24	Western Redbud Cercis occidentalis	10-18' h x 10-18' w	D	Low	Magenta Spring	No	Showy flowers in Spring. Not best parkway tree due to lower, bushier branches.
25	Strawberry Tree Arbutus Marina	20-30' h x 25' w	E	Low-Mod.	Pink + Strawberry- like fruit Fall	No	Low maintenance. Showy flowers, fruit and bark.
26	Fan-Tex Ash ; Fraxinus velutina 'Rio Grande'	50' h x 30' w	D	Low-Mod.	Not significant	No	Small fruit in Summer or Fall. Gold leaves in Fall.
27	Sweet Bay Laurus nobilis	35' h x 20' w	E	Low-Mod.	Green,wht or yellow Spring	No	Small berries in Fall. Good for parkway. Good for hedge or topiary. Long lived.
28	Afghan Pine Pinus eldarica	30-50' h x 15-25'w	E	Low	Not significant	No	Good wind break. Popular for Christmas tree. Has pine cones. Needs wide parkways.
29	Columbia Plane Tree Platanus 'Columbia'	50' h x 35- 40' w	D	Low-Mod.	Not significant	No	Best for parks. Good shade tree. Beautiful bark.

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30	Ornamental Pear Pyrus 'Chanticleer'	25-35'h x 13-16'w	D	Low-Mod.	Showy White Spring	No	Gorgeous white flowers. Good street tree. Ideal for areas with limited space.
31	California Pepper Schinus molle	25-50'h x 25-40'w	E	Low	White, fragrant Summer	No	Fast growing. More trimming. Prolific red fruit in fall or winter. Long lived.
32	Saw-Leaf Zelkova Zelkova serrate	50-70'h x 50-70'w	D	Low-Mod.	Not significant	No	Good street tree in large space. Leaves turn in Fall. Good substitute for Chinese Elm.
33	Catalina Ironwood Lyonothamnus floribundus asplenifolius	50-60' h x 40' w	E	Low	Showy white Summer	Yes	Good street tree, but needs space. Nice bark. Fern-shaped leaves. Brown fruit litter in Fall.
34	Toyon Heteromeles arbutifolia	15' h x 15' w	E	Low	Showy white Summer	Yes	More a large, multi-trunk shrub. Good under utilities. Good hedge. Prolific red berries.
35	So. California Black Walnut Juglans californica	30' h x 30' w	D	Low-Mod.	Inconspicuous Walnuts in fall	Yes	Very large, so not great street tree. Not easy to find. Squirrels love the walnuts.
36	Hollyleaf Cherry Prunus ilicifolia	25' h x 30' w	E	Low-Mod.	Showy white Spring	Yes	Many varieties. Better used as shrub or hedge. Purple fruit in Summer.
37	Coast Live Oak Quercus agrifolia	20-70' h x 30-80' w	E	Low-Mod.	Not significant	Yes	Common street tree in wide parkways. Long lived. Presently susceptible to diseases.
38	Holly Oak Quercus ilex	65' h x 50' w	E	Low	Not significant	Yes	Very large - not good street tree. Long lived. Medium acorns in Fall & Winter.
39	Southern Live Oak Quercus virginiana	50' h x 50' w	E - D	Low	Not significant	Yes	Briefly deciduous. Smaller of the Oaks. Long lived. Acorns.
40	Scrub Oak Quercus berberidifolia	6-12' h x 6- 10' w	E	Low	Not significant	Yes	Better used as shrub or hedge. Good under utilities. Small acorns in Fall & Winter.
41	Canyon Live Oak Quercus chrysolepis	65' h x 50' w	E	Low	Not significant	Yes	Very large - not good street tree. Love live. Medium acorns in Fall & Winter.
42	Engelmann Oak Quercus engelmannii	50-60' h x 50' w	E	Low	Not significant	Yes	Very large-not good street tree. Long lived. A rare Oak. Acorns.
43	California Black Oak Quercus kelloggii	65' h x 50' w	E	Low	Not significant	Yes	Better at higher altitudes. Very large-not good street tree. Long lived. Acorns Fall & Winter.
44	Interior Live Oak Quercus wislizeni	65' h x 50' w	E	Low	Not significant	Yes	Very large-not good street tree. Long lived. Dense leaves. Acorns Fall & Winter.

Note: Trees under Southern California Edison lines should be no taller than 25' at maturity.

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"The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago. The second best time is now." African proverb

ALTERNATIVE TREE SELECTION

This list includes native and drought-tolerant trees from the Metropolitan Water District's Be Water Wise program and offered here as alternative options for consideration alongside our approved tree list.

#	Tree Name (Common & Scientific)	Size	Deciduous Evergreen	Water Needs	Blooms Bloom Season	Native	Maintenance & Comments
45	Bubba Desert Willow <i>Chilopsis linearis</i> 'Bubba'	20h x 10-15'w	D	Low	Showy, Fragrant Fall or Summer	Yes	Small flowering. Useful in riparian or native garden settings. Multi-trunked or low-branching.
46	Blue Elderberry <i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	20-30'h x 20-30'w	D	Low-Mod.	White, fragrant Summer, Spring	Yes	Prefers well-drained soils with moisture. Prune readily. Food source for wildlife.
47	Tecate Cypress <i>Hesperocyparis forbesii</i>	33'h x 25'w	E	Low V Low	Not significant	Yes	Good privacy screen or hedge. Rapidly growing. Thrives in rocky/well-drained soils.
48	Torrey Pine <i>Pinus toerreyana</i>	25-150' h x 25-50'w	E	Low-Mod.	Not significant	Yes	Very large - not good street tree. Prune in winter when wood boring insects are less active.
49	California Ash <i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>	23' h x 15' w	D	Low	Showy white Spring	Yes	Require little pruning. Maintain damaged branches to avoid spread diseases.
50	Island Ceanothus <i>Ceanothus arboreus</i>	20-30' h x 10' w	E	V. Low	Blue Winter, Spring	Yes	Prune in dry season to reduce chance of infection. Tolerates a variety of soils.
51	Catalina Cherry <i>Prunus ilicifolia</i> ssp. <i>lyonii</i>	25-40' h x 20' w	E	Low-Mod. V. Low	Showy white Spring, Winter	Yes	Edible fruits favored by birds. Can be planted as a hedge.
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