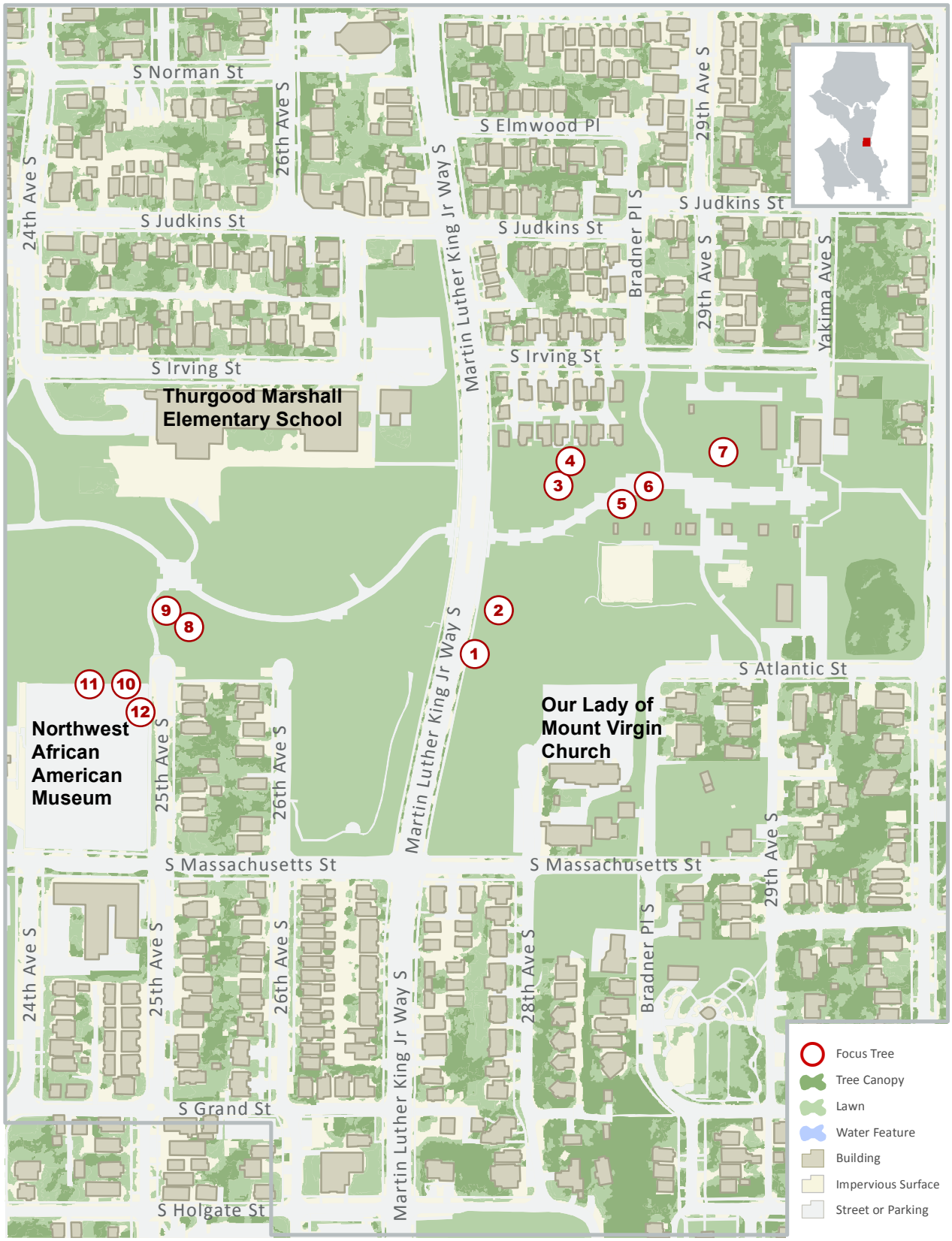
# SAM SMITH PARK TREE WALK



Trees for Seattle, a program of the City of Seattle, is dedicated to growing and maintaining healthy, awe-inspiring trees in Seattle. Trees build strong communities by:

- Making our streets friendlier places to walk and bike
- Soaking up rainwater to keep our streams, lakes, and Puget Sound clean
- Calming traffic, helping to avoid accidents
- Cleaning our air, making it easier to breathe
- And much more!

Seattle's urban forest depends on you! 2/3 of Seattle's trees are planted around homes and maintained by residents. Without those trees, Seattle would be a sad place. Working together, we can have an urban forest that is healthy and growing.

You can get involved in many ways:

Attend a Tree Walk: We host free monthly tours of the unique and beautiful trees in neighborhoods across Seattle. Self-guided versions are also available on our website.

Volunteer: Our volunteers lead Tree Walks with friends and neighbors and participate in fun events like Tree Stewardship work parties to help keep trees healthy and thriving. You can commit for an hour or a lifetime. Everyone is welcome.

Plant a Tree: Our Trees for Neighborhoods project supports Seattle residents in planting trees around their homes by providing support, free trees, and workshops.

For more information on our work and how you can get involved:

**Visit:** www.Seattle.gov/trees
**Call:** 206-615-1668
**Email:** treeambassador@seattle.gov
**Follow** Trees for Seattle on Facebook

# Sam Smith Park

## *Seattle's common and rare trees!*

This tree walk takes place in Sam Smith Park and Jimi Hendrix Park, with access to the Mountains to Sound Greenway trail. These trees together have a rich litany of facts and history behind them, and the walk makes for a delightful stroll through an open park space.

| **Tree Number & Common name**<br>*Botanical name*<br>Address | **Tree Descriptions**<br>**Notes** | **Photos** |
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| **1. Sugar Maple**<br>*Acer saccharum*<br><br>Behind Arbor Day stands | The first tree of the walk is easy to recognize, and probably familiar to you! Sugar maples are famous for their fall color and the delicious maple syrup made from their sap. They are commonly found across much of Central and Eastern North America. You might recognize the leaf from the Canadian flag; sugar maple is Canada's national symbol! They are distinguishable from the bigleaf maples of the PNW, because their leaves are generally smaller, and more shallowly lobed. Maple leaves are also opposite, meaning they grow from the same point on a stem, on opposite sides of one another. |  <br>  |

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| **2. White Ash**<br>*Fraxinus americana*<br><br>Next to MLK Jr Way S | White ash is commonly found in the eastern half of the U.S. and Canada. In autumn, white ash adds to the beautiful fall foliage with yellow leaves that sport a hint of rosy purple shading. You've almost certainly made use of white ash wood, which is commonly used for sports equipment, tool handles, church pews, and all sorts of furniture.<br>Ashes are easy to distinguish as they are one of few trees with opposite and compound leaves. Compound leaves mean that a single leaf has many leaflets. If you see the leaves growing out of a green stem and not a woody part, it's a compound leaf!<br>Ash seeds are eaten by many birds such as wood ducks, finches and cardinals. Ash populations across the U.S. are at risk of decimation from the invasive pest, emerald ash borer. |  <br>  |
| **3. Beacon Oak**<br>*Quercus bicolor 'Bonnie and Mike'*<br><br>Crossing over the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail | This is a cultivar of the Swamp White Oak. Unlike the typical oak, this oak's branches grow upright and tight to the trunk. This tight, columnar growth was what attracted horticulturists Bonne and Michael Dirr, on a chance expedition in the Shenandoah Valley. They are hardy street trees and survive well in boulevards, residential lawns, parks and gardens. The leaves are shiny, dark green in the spring and summer and change into a nice golden yellow in the fall. Younger beacon oak trees are smoother and light-brown in color, while older mature beacon oak bark is a light gray and is furrowed with irregular fissures. |  |

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| **4. Austrian Pine**<br>*Pinus nigra*<br><br>Behind the Beacon Oaks | Commonly found around Seattle, the Austrian pine is originally from Europe ranging from Spain to the Black Sea. It was introduced to the North American colonies as an ornamental tree in 1759 and many homesteaders planted it as windbreaks. According to Arborday.org, over 217 million of these trees were planted during the Dust Bowl. The tree has long had a history of thriving in some of the least hospitable soil conditions in America. Austrian pines grow to heights of 66-180ft with a spread of 20-40ft wide. |  <br>  |
| **5. Japanese Zelkova**<br>*Zelkova serrata*<br><br>Next to the median filled with plants and trees | Native to Japan, Korea, eastern China and Taiwan. Japanese Zelkova belongs to the Elm family, but is highly resistant to Dutch elm disease, making it a good replacement tree for American elm. This hardy tree can thrive in urban areas, even in poor conditions such as: air pollution, poor drainage, compacted soil, and/or drought. The tree is known as “keyaki” in Japan, where the wood is highly prized by woodworkers. There is a keyaki there that is over 1,000 years old and is a national natural monument.<br>Japanese zelkovas can reach up to 80ft tall, with a spread of 50 to 75ft. The leaves are on the smaller side, ranging from 1.5 to 4 inches long. |  <br>  |

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| **6. Japanese Snowbell**<br>*Styrax japonicas cu.* Snowcone<br><br>Inside the medians | The Japanese snowbell is a popular ornamental tree native to China, Japan, and Korea. Like many of the trees on this walk, they are hardy and can succeed in urban areas. This tree is often described as graceful or elegant, due to the gentle arc of the branches and the beautiful bell shaped flowers. These flowers blossom in late spring to early summer, and are quite fragrant. One could say these aromatic, aesthetic flowers ring in summer!<br>These trees are in the genus Styrax, which contains a number of shrub species that were highly valued for their resins since the late middle ages. |  <br>  |
| **7. Swamp White Oak**<br>*Quercus bicolor*<br><br>Left side leading to open area | This young swamp white oak may not look it now, but it will one day be a large and regal tree, with a broad and beautiful canopy. This tree grows to about 80 feet and typically lives up to 300 years. The acorns are an important source of food for many wildlife, and have also been used in a fair amount of human cuisine. Acorn production typically starts at 20-30 years, but the greatest production won't happen until nearly the turn of the century!<br>Swamp white oaks are an increasingly popular urban tree, as they are tolerant of difficult soil conditions, and are relatively easy to transplant. They provide plentiful shade, which is crucial to urban areas in a warming world. Their distinguishing feature are their two-colored leaves; dark green on the top, and grayish-silver on the bottom. This is where they get the species name bicolor. |  <br>  |

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| **8. Incense Cedar**<br>*Calocedrus decurrens*<br><br>Crossing over MLK Jr Way S into the West side of the park. Before you reach the soccer field on your left. | These gorgeous, evergreen trees belong to the genus Calocedrus, which translates to "beautiful cedar". The common name is derived from the incense-like aroma produced from crushing the leaves. Go ahead and try it with a little bit of leaf! Incense cedar is quite similar to our PNW native Western redcedar, but has slightly different cones and leaf arrangement. The native range of incense cedar is just south of us, in southern Oregon, California, the SW corner of Nevada, and NW Mexico. In the wild, they can live up to 1000+ years and can grow up to 100 to 150ft. In cultivation, it typically grows shorter to 30 to 50ft tall. |  |
| **9. Western Red Cedar**<br>*Thuja plicata*<br><br>Next to the Incense Cedar | Time to test out those id skills! Right next to the incense cedar is our native western redcedar. One way you can distinguish the western red cedar is by looking at its cones. Redcedar cones have 4 – 6 pairs of scales, while incense cedar has 2 – 3 pairs of scales which are from the incense cedar. Give the leaves a smell too to see if you can tell the difference!<br>Technically speaking, the western redcedar is not a true cedar. However, redcedar has played a vital role in PNW ecosystems, and in indigenous cultures for ages. Coast Salish peoples use the wood in a wide variety of tools and furnishings, and great importance is placed on the tree, which is often referred to as "the tree of life." They can live over a thousand years, with the oldest verified being 1460 years old. Mature trees can grow to heights of 213 – 230ft tall, with a trunk width of 10-13ft. |  |

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| **10. x Chitalpa**<br>*X chitalpa tashkentensis*<br><br>In the Jimi Hendrix Park, next to his flower garden | Wondering why this species has an x in the name? That's because it's a hybrid! This hybrid is across between desert willow (Chilopsis linearis) and southern catalpa (Catalpa bignonoides). The x Chitalpa has a fascinating history; it was first hybridized in Tashkent (capital of Uzbekistan) in the 1960s and introduced to the U.S. in 1977. An American botanist brought cuttings for growth in the U.S., and the belief is that all living chitalpas are descended from those plants. This makes sense because chitalpas are sterile, which is particularly convenient since the parent trees both have rather messy seed pods. You may have seen the giant, long, brown seed pods of catalpa littering the streets before! Chitalpas' lineage also gave them tolerance to many soil conditions, helping them to thrive in urban areas.<br>Chitalpas are popular ornamental trees; in the late spring through summer you can see the blossom of trumpet-shaped pale lavender-pink flowers with pale yellow throats. |  |
| **11. Empress Tree**<br>*Paulownia tomentosa*<br><br>Next to the NW African American Museum | Also known as the princess tree, the empress tree is rich with history. The genus name—Paulownia—is derived from Anna Pavlovna, who in her life was a Grand Duchess, Princess, and Queen. The genus was given this name by botanist Phillipp Franz von Siebold, who gained fame from his studies of Japanese flora and fauna. Most notably, he introduced the now pervasive invasive weed, Japanese knotweed to Europe and the U.S. In Japan, wealthy families would often plant an empress tree when a baby girl was born, and cut the tree at the age of marriage and fashion dowry gifts from the wood.<br>The most striking feature of the empress tree is the beautiful purple blooms produced before the leaves in early spring. These flowers are edible and occasionally used in salads. The large, heart-shaped leaves are similar to catalpa leaves. |  <br>  |

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| **12. Honey Locust**<br>*Gleditsia triacanthos*<br><br>Next to 25th Ave S | Also known as the thorny locust, is a deciduous tree in the Fabaceae family. It's native central North America, but is highly adaptable and has taken on an almost weed-like distribution worldwide. The name is derived from the sweet taste of the pod pulp, which has many uses in indigenous culture.<br>Honey locust is also known as thorny locust, although many thornless variants are grown as ornamentals or in other projects. The thorns are typically 1-4 inches long, but can grow to be 8 inches long! It is hypothesized that these huge thorns were evolved to protect from megafauna in the Pleistocene era, given that they are not particularly useful in protecting from the smaller fauna of today.<br>They are identifiable by the thorns, and the pinnately compound leaves (lots of small, paired leaves, growing in a row along a branch). They leaf out late in spring, and have cram-colored flowers in late spring. |  <br>  |

Walk onto S Massachusetts St. and head east until you come across 28th Ave S. Take a left and you are back at the church.