The Happiness Walk

Finding Happiness in the Sac State Urban Forest

ABOUT THE HAPPINESS WALK

- One of the most recognizable features of Sacramento State University is what can be described as its “urban forest.” As such, it offers anyone who takes a walk across campus a wonderful opportunity to get some exercise while enjoying the benefits that come from being attentive to the green world that provides the living context for the campus infrastructure.
- Numerous studies have demonstrated that connecting with nature can yield a bevy of valued outcomes, both physical and mental, which combine to promote significant levels of happiness. This slide show describes a guided walk focused on our urban forest. We call it the Happiness Walk.
- The Happiness Walk is designed to guide you on a a walk across campus, and in the process become familiar with some of the more impressive and unusual trees that make Sacramento State a remarkably beautiful campus.
- You will be directed to “exemplar trees.” These are trees that have been chosen as examples of their species. Once you learn how to identify a species from your observations of an exemplar tree, you will be able to identify other trees of the same species. In this PowerPoint, a photo of each exemplar is provided and in some cases a close-up of the leaves.

Numbered trees?

- Many of the trees will have a numbered metal tag attached in a fairly conspicuous place. In the Happiness Walk you will be directed to as many trees as possible that display such a number. By comparing the number with the number in the slide show, you will know if you have found the right tree; however, most trees do not have a tag. When no tag is present, you will have to rely on the location and description of tree. This information is found in this slide show. Incidentally, most trees, tagged or not, have a number.
- Let’s get started.



- There is a great deal of research that shows that good things happen when people connect with nature and in particular trees.
- Following the walk, you are encouraged to examine outcomes you can attribute to your experience with the Sac State canopy.

- You can start with any exemplar tree, but this slide begins with trees near Solano Hall, home of the Health Science Office.
- *This project is result of collaboration between the Rekhi Singh Endowed Professor of Happiness of the Department of Psychology and the Allied Health Science Department.*

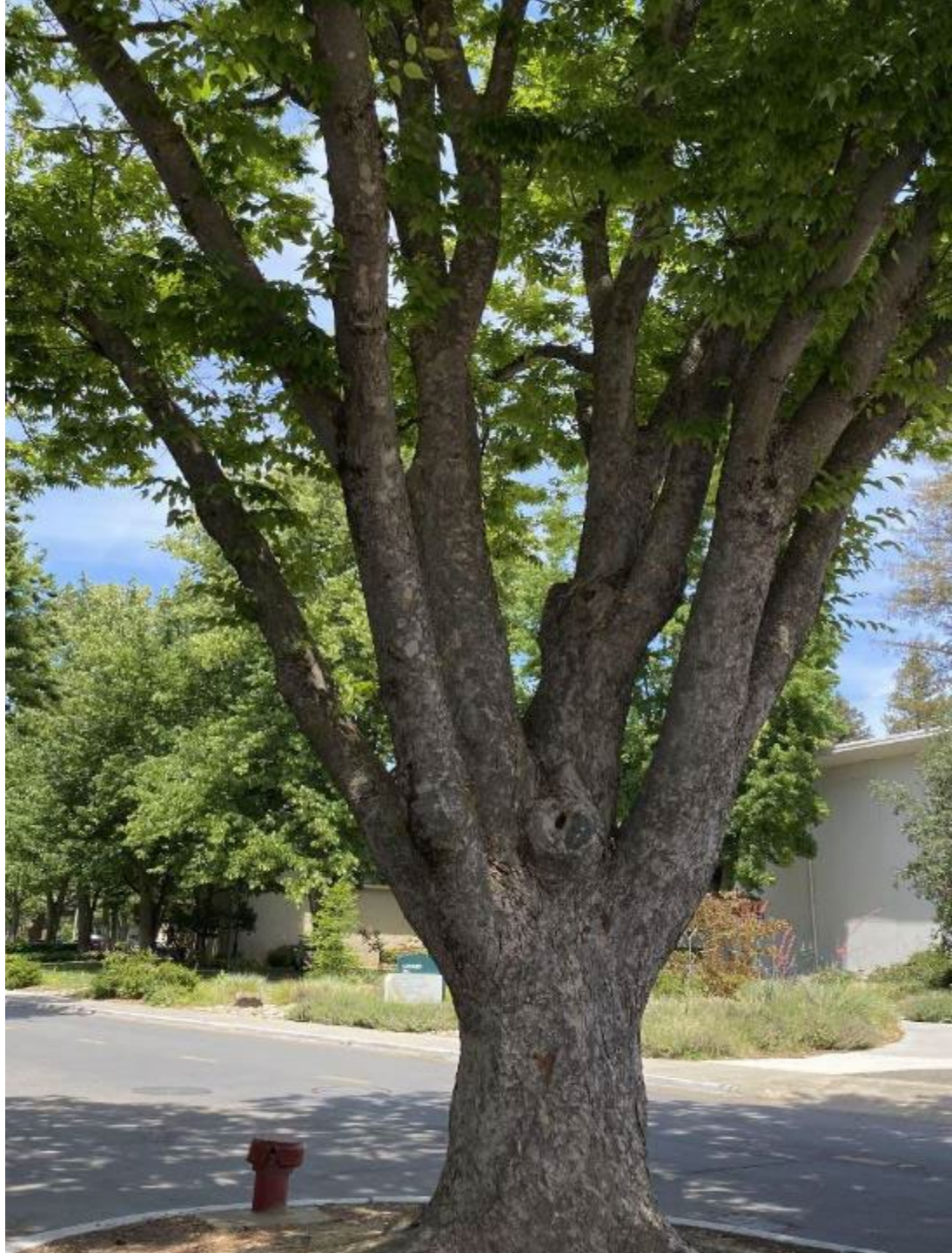
PYRUS CALLERYANA
Callery Pear, Bradford

- #2909 This tree is found adjacent to the outdoor stairs that lead to the second floor of Solano Hall.
- This tree is notable for its attractive flowers which unfortunately give off a highly offensive smell, often described as a combination of rotting fish and semen. You can view this tree from the 4th floor stairwell.



ZELKOVA SERRATA
Japanese Zelkova

- #2908 is located very close to Solano Hall. It is a *zelkova serrata* and is found on the traffic island just to the east of the exterior stairs. It is a hardy tree with a very unique silhouette—sometimes described as vase-like. You will find many of these trees lining campus streets and paths.
- As this tree ages you will note that as older bark sheds, a lower layer of orange bark can be seen.
- In some Asian cultures this tree is viewed as guardian or protector.



CASUARINA SSP
She-Oak

- #2896 Walk in a northerly direction on the sidewalk that is parallel to Yosemite. Pass the main door and immediately to the right of the door (as you face the door) you will see two trees that look like pine trees with long wispy, drooping needles. Don’t be fooled by their appearance. *Casuarina ssp* (ssp means multiple sub species) is an angiosperm (flowering plant) and not related to pines at all.



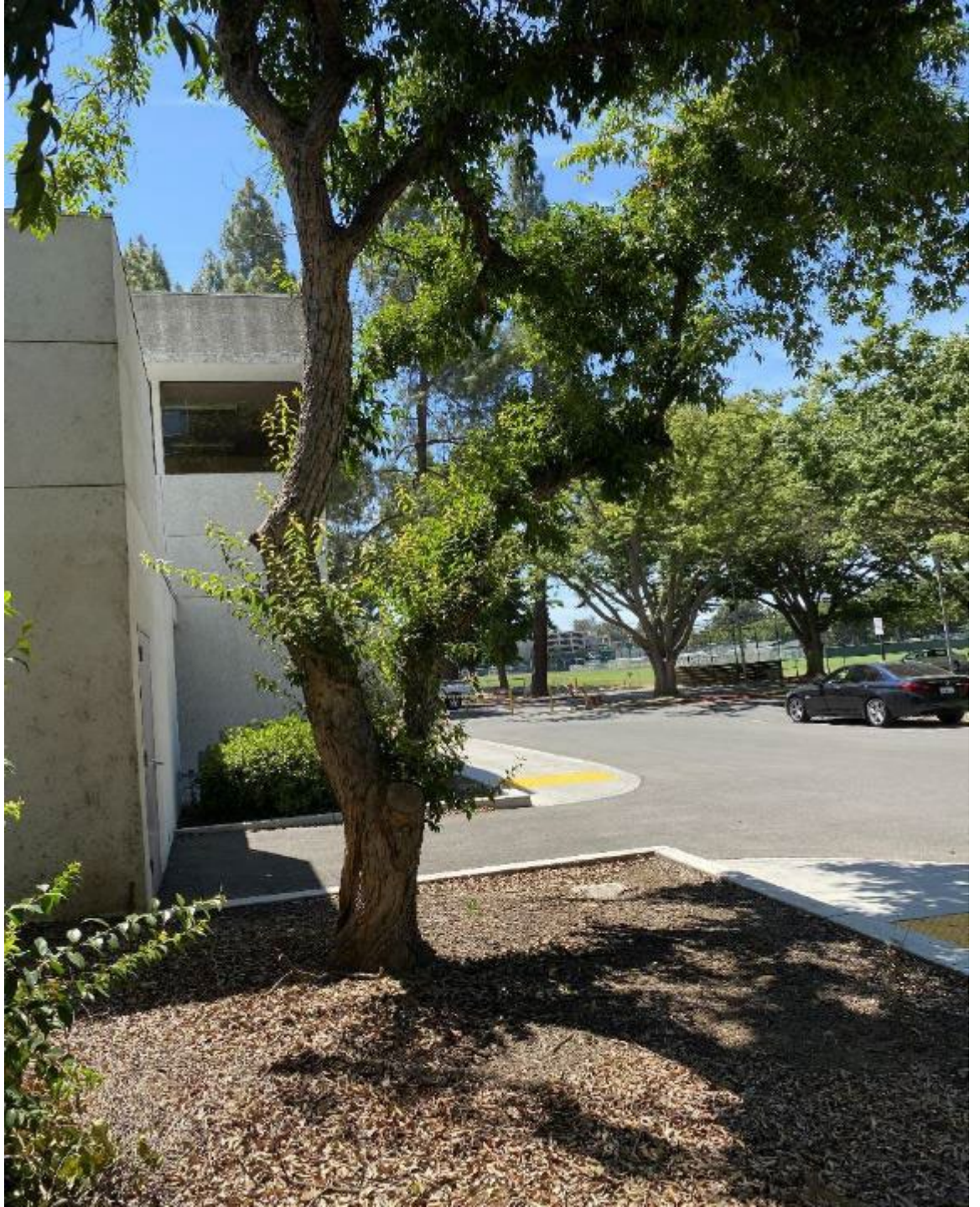
PINUS CANARIENSIS Canary Island Pine

- # 2872 Continue walking in a northernly direction (toward the parking garage). When you reach the corner of Yosemite hall you will see a very tall pine tree. This is a *pinus canariensis*. It is native to the Canary Islands. This tree is a fast-growing tree with an average increase of 24 inches per year. It can reach a height of 200 feet. Notice the reddish tile-like pattern of the bark. Face the parking structure and look to your left. You will see several more Canary Island Pines.



XYLOSMA SSP
Brusholly, Logwood

- #1331 Cross the street from Yosemite and walk to the backside of the Athletic Office . Here you will see a vey interesting small tree. This tree, native to China, is a hardy tree that keeps its leaves all year long (evergreen). It gets its name from the fragrance associated with its spring flowers and wood. The name comes form the Greek *xylon* meaning "wood" and *osme* meaning "fragrance."
- You pronounce this tree “zai loz ma.”



CUPRESSUS SEMPERVIRENS Mediterranean Cypress

- #1373-1374 The building across the parking lot to the west of the xylosma is the Facilities Service building. If you walk toward Yosemite Hall and look at the front of the Facilities Service building, you will see two Mediterranean cypresses.
- These trees are conifers (cone bearing) and can reach up to 100 feet tall. They are native to the eastern Mediterranean. They can live to be very old (1000 years). According to a Persian legend, this tree was the first tree to grow in Paradise.



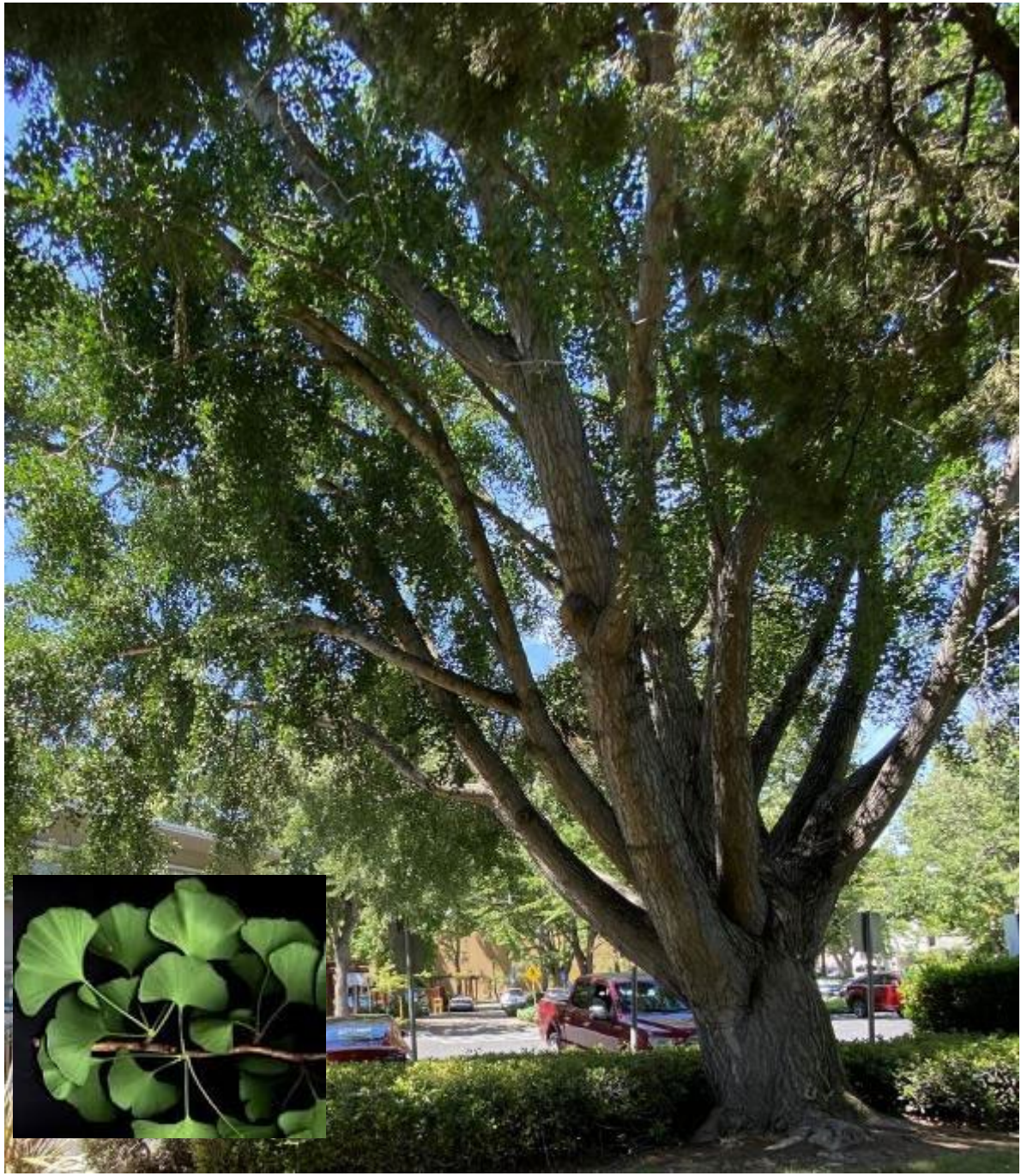
EUCALYPTUS SIDEROXYLON Mugga Ironbark

- #3494 Now walk toward the administration building (Sacramento Hall). You notice, very close to the parking lot, on the building side, a very large, tree with elegant, drooping branches and reddish bark. You will notice a large burl (bulge) on this tree. Such a burl may be the result of an injury, infection, or infestation or simply genetic. This tree is native to Australia. There are about 700 variations of eucalyptus trees.



GINKGO BILOBA Maidenhair

- #3496 This is a magnificent ginkgo biloba. If you stand facing the eucalyptus with your back to the parking lot, you will see the ginkgo to your right. This is a beautiful tree. It has remarkable fan shaped leaves which turn a stunning yellow during the fall. You will find several ginkgo trees on campus.
- The earliest leaf fossil for this tree dates back 270 million years.



TILIA AMERICANA
Basswood

- #3547 This tree is native to North America. It has large attractive heart-shaped leaves. Its flowers are lovely and fragrant.
- It is believed to contain compounds that have medical applications. You can by a tincture of basswood from Amazon.com
- You will find this tree directly across the parking lot from the ginkgo, look for the large heart-shaped leaves. You will find others nearby
- German folklore has it that basswood trees would keep witches away.



JUNIPERUS CHINENSIS Chinese Juniper

- #3498 Stand facing the front door of Sacramento Hall. Move to your right to the corner of the building, look just past the windows and you will see two *juniperus chinensus* trees. Native to China this is a coniferous (bears cones) evergreen. It is also dioecious (either male or female but not both).
- The essential oil from this plant has been shown to have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects. (Raina R. et al (2019) Potential of Juniperus as a nutrceutical in human and veterinary medicine. Heliyon, 5(8), e02376 doi: 10.1016/j.heliyon.2019.)



SEQUOIA SEMPERVIRENS Coastal Redwood

- #3408 The Main Quad is home to one of several groves of these magnificent trees. These trees are native to the California coast, have incredible life spans (think hundreds of years) and can grow to be over 300 feet tall.
- The lumber from the coastal redwood is highly prized due to its beauty and resistance to decay.
- A redwood can grow 3 to 10 feet in one year.



LIQUIDAMBAR
Sweet Gum Tree

- #3395—3398 There are several of these trees located to the east of the redwood grove.
- Sweet gum trees are known for their brilliant fall colors and for the hard, spiked globe shaped seed pods.
- The leaves, which are shaped like a 5 lobed star, when crushed have a pleasant fragrance. When you see the spiked seed pods, you know you have found a sweet gum tree. The name comes from the resin which Native Americans once chewed as gum.







MAGNOLIA GRANDIFLORA
Southern Magnolia

- #3458 Look to the south from the *liquidambar* you will see a dirt footpath that leads to the roundhouse. This tree is near a rain garden adjacent to the path.
- The are two types of magnolia to be found on campus. One is evergreen the other deciduous. The one you see here keeps its leaves year-round. It is known for its very large white flowers.
- In many cultures this tree symbolizes virtue and nobility. It is also often considered good luck to have one nearby.



CEDRUS ATLANTICA
Atlas Cedar

- If you walk to the east from the magnolia tree, you will see the campus theater (designated by large letters on the northside of Shasta Hall). You will also see two cedar trees that look as though they were designed by Dr. Seuss. They have a bluish tint, and markedly droopy branches. This tree produces an aromatic oil that is a natural insect repellant. The wood also is used to make drawers and “cedar chests.”



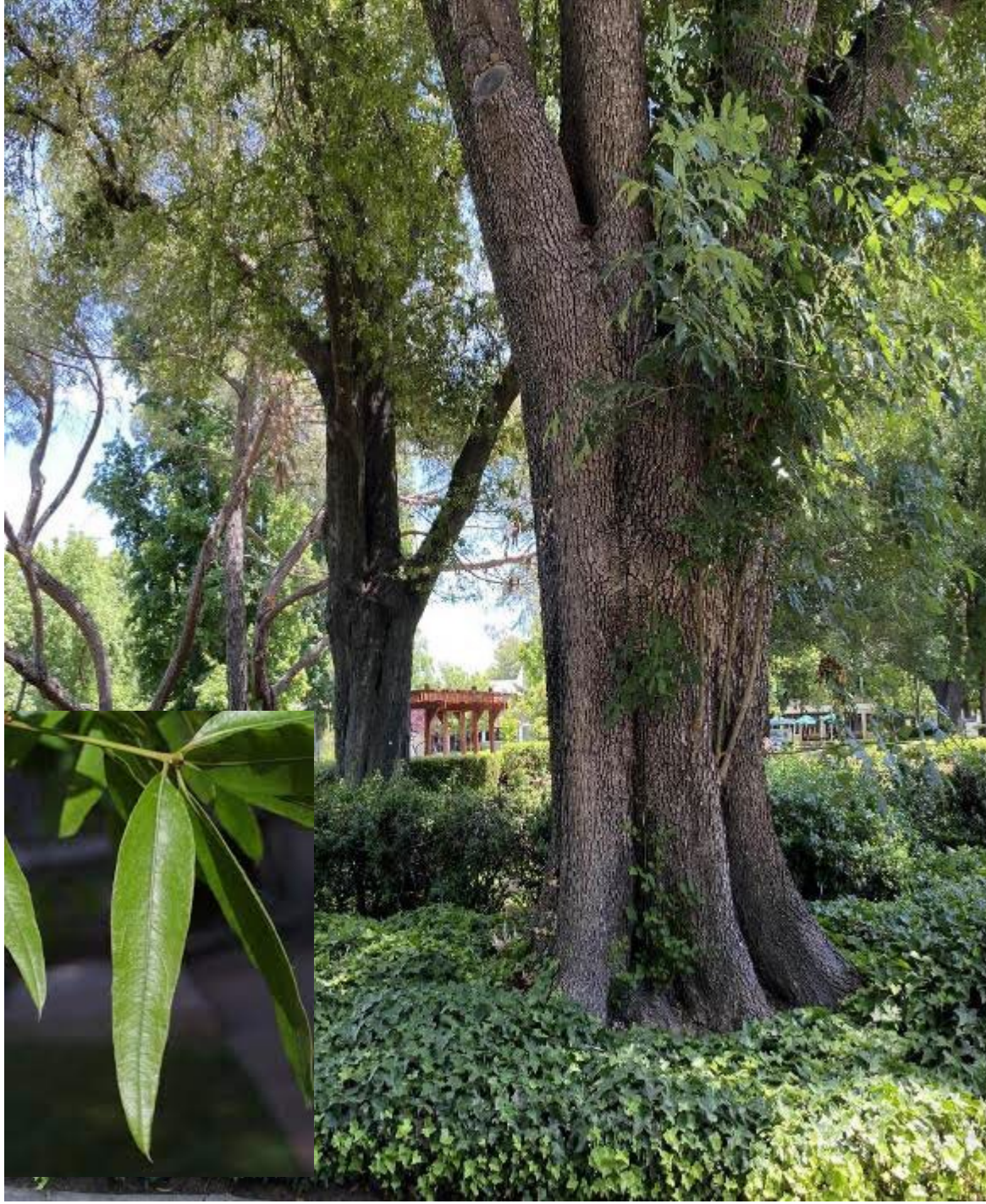
OLEANDER

- Oleander is not a tree, but a shrub. As you walk from the cedar trees toward River Front Center, you will see two large oleander bushes. These shrubs produce a lovely floral display, are drought and heat resistant and consequently line California freeways. Warning: This plant is extremely toxic. Ingesting a small amount can cause death, contact with sap may cause skin irritation. Now cut across the quad to the Roundhouse.



QUERCUS PHELLOS
Willow Oak

- #3305/07 The willow oak is native to North America. It produces acorns, has leaves that are spear shaped, 2-5 inches long, with a little bristle at the end. This tree is commonly used for domestic lumber. Look toward Starbucks from the Round House, you can’t miss this tree.
- Celtic folklore suggests that ancient Druids practiced their religious rites under oak trees such as this.



PISTACHE CHINENSIS
Chinese Pistache

- #3437 Take the path that leads from the Roundhouse, parallel to Douglas Hall, toward Starbucks. About midway there, you will see a large tree adjacent to the path with very distinct compound leaves with an even number on each stem. During the fall these leaves turn bright yellow, orange, and red. You will see a post with the name of this tree displayed at the foot of the tree.



FRAXINUS UHDEI Tropical Ash

- #3335 Walk as though you were going from the Roundhouse to Starbucks. Just after you pass the *pistache* you will see an immense tree. This tree is a tropical ash tree. It has value as a building material and is used for molding, flooring, hockey sticks, and baseball bats. This tree is a native of Mexico.
- In some cultures, ash trees are thought to serve as protectors.



LAGERSTROEMIA INDICA Crape (Crepe) Myrtle

- #2450 Take the walkway between Mendocino Hall and Calaveras Hall, and just before you reach Placer Hall, look to your left and you will see several crepe myrtle trees. They are easy to recognize from their smooth light- colored bark and graceful limbs.
- This tree is a is a common symbol of love in many societies. The flowers it produces are considered to be the flowers of the gods, sacred to Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love



MORE GINKG0

- You are familiar with this tree already, but it is worth visiting this lane which is lined on both sides by ginkgo biloba. During the fall you will see these trees transform into a vivid yellow.
- This tree-lined walkway is just south of Calaveras Hall leading to (or from) Eureka Hall.



PLATANUS X HISPANICA London Plane Tree

- 2583-2061 If you walk down “Ginkgo Lane,” you will find your way to the east side of Eureka Hall, here you will see a large stand of London plane trees. (Note: the x in the name means that the plant is a hybrid.) It produces seed pods that might be confused with Sweet Gum pods. The London plane seed pods are more fragile and eventually decompose. Sweet Gum pods are woody and tough. Leaves are large and 3-5 lobed.
- The London plane tree is a hybrid, the result of combining the Oriental plane tree with the sycamore. Its bark is more variable than a sycamore, and the seed pods are found two to a stem. Single pods to a stem indicate a sycamore.



QUERCUS PHELLOS
Willow Oak

- #2547 From the London plane grove continue walking as if you were going to the library. When you come to the corner where the pedestrian walk intersects with Sinclair Road (this is the southwestern corner of Brighton Hall) you will see this elegant tree. This is another willow oak. It is included here due to its elegant silhouette.



LERIODENDRON TULIPIFERIA
Tulip Tree

- #2103-2105 If you start at the main entrance of Capistrano Hall and walk along the path that leads to the outdoor theater, you will pass three trees that have leaves that look like tulips. Tulip trees are related to magnolias. The trees are easy to spot, just look for their leaves. And while you do this, also take note of the redwood groves.



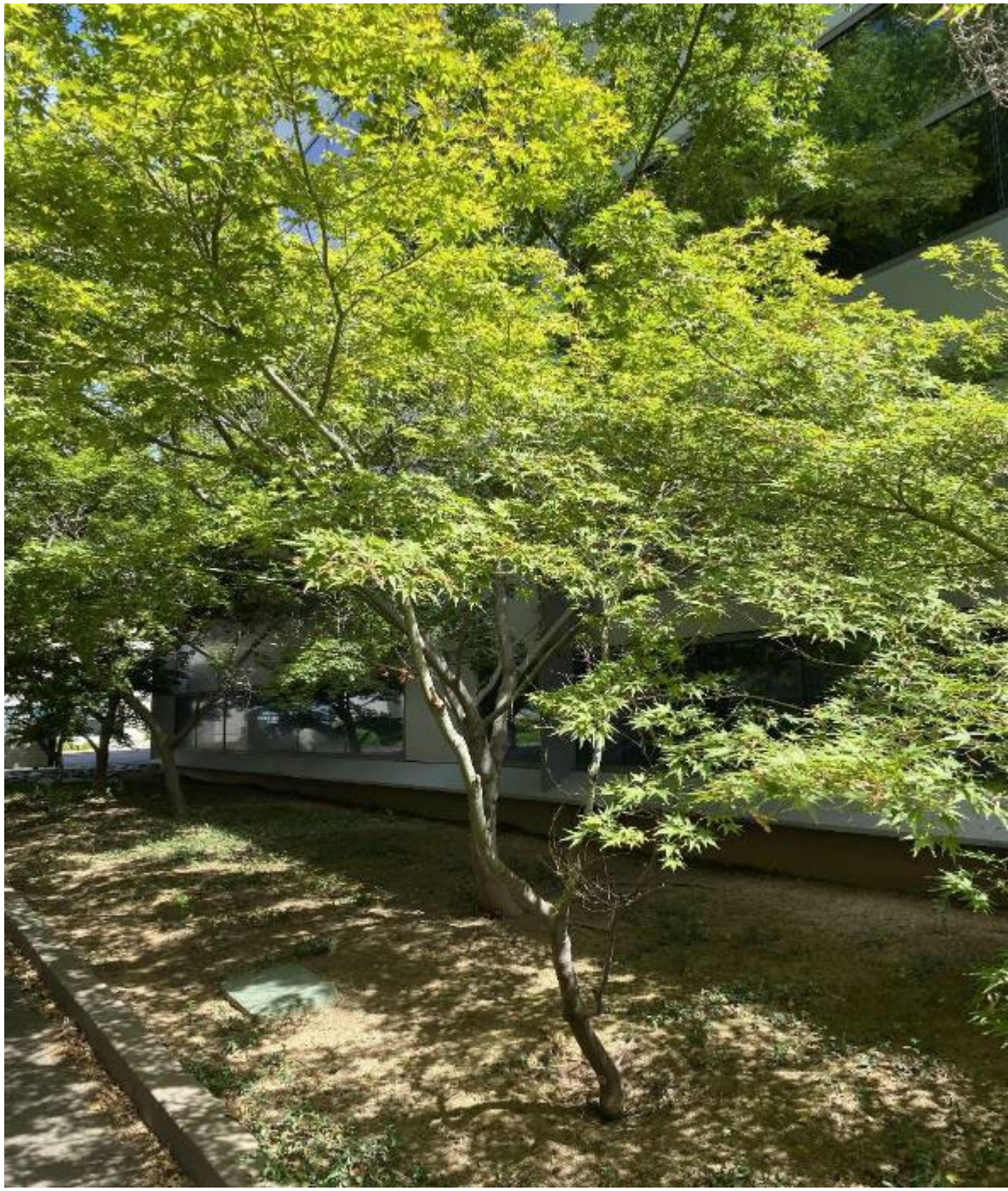
Eucalyptus Cinera Silver Dollar Blue Gum

- If you look in a northerly direction from the tulip trees you will see some recent plantings. Two of those are silver dollar blue gum trees. They are known for their fragrant round leaves. They don't grow nearly as tall as their more common cousins, but they can reach up to 40 feet. They grow rather rapidly, about 9 feet per year, until mature. So, you should see some significant change take place in these trees over the next year. These photos were taken during the summer of 2020.



ACER PALMATUM Japanese Maple

- #973-982 From the outdoor theater, walk to the southside of the library to the walking path between the library and AIRC. Here you will see a line of Japanese maples. The shade provided by the AIRC building provides a good environment for these delicate trees. Their small leaves turn red in winter.



QUERCUS RUBRA
Northern Red Oak

- #966-972 While you are admiring the Japanese maple, turn and look at the other side of the pathway. This side is lined with *quercus rubra,* northern red oak. Notice distinctive leaves. They are 5-8 inches long, with 7 to 11 bristle tipped lobes.



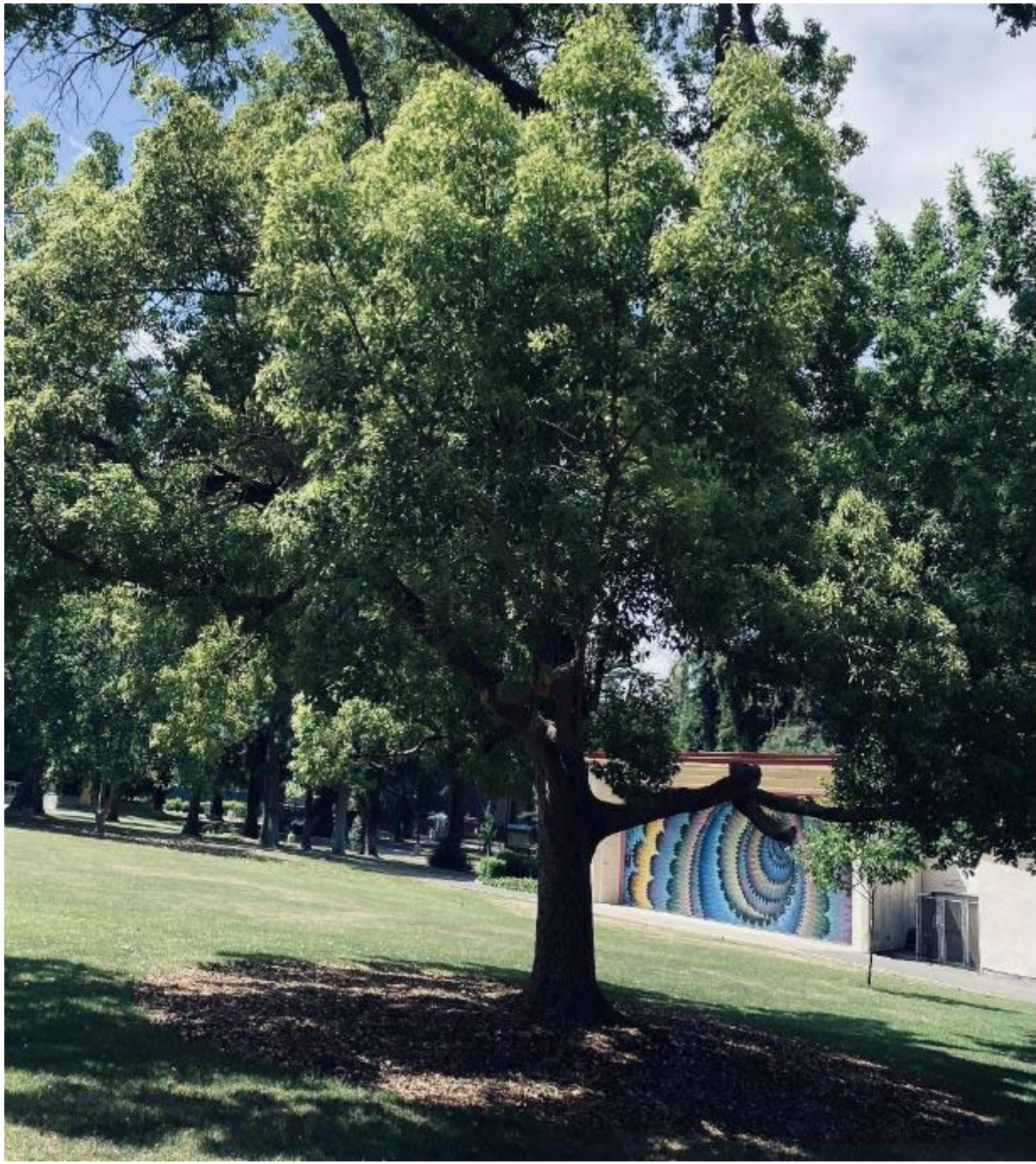
MAYTENUS BOARIA
Mayten Tree

- #940 Leave the library and walk as though you were going to The Well. Just northwest of Benicia Hall you will see two bright green trees with long willowy branches that undulate with the slightest breeze. These trees are native to Chile. The trees remain green year long.



CAMPHOR CINNAMOMUM Camphor Tree

- #2100 Head north from the Mayten Tree and walk toward the outdoor theater. To the right front of the stage, you will see a bright green tree. To determine if you have found the correct tree crush and smell a leaf. If it smells like camphor (sort of a cinnamon aroma), you have found the right tree.



EUCALYPTUS GLOBULUS Blue Gum

- This last tree in this series is a little out of the way but worth the walk. It is located just east of Parking Lot 2 on the river side of State University Drive. The blue gum is native to southern Australia but has adapted well to California. Its leaves have a pleasant camphor-like fragrance and are used in producing an essential oil believed to possess medicinal qualities. It gets its common name from the sticky sap it secretes and its blue-green leaves.
- You will see many of these trees on the west side of campus along College Town Drive.



END NOTES…

- How many trees were you able to locate and identify of the same species as the exemplar trees?
- Bear in mind there are many species not covered in this challenge, and we didn't include the arboretum that contains numerous species not found on the rest of campus.
- As you stroll across campus, you will have a whole network of botanical friends to enjoy.

TO RECEIVE CREDIT FOR THIS EXERCISE, PLEASE GO TO CANVAS AND COMPLETE SURVEY ENTITLED, "THE CONNECTING WITH NATURE SURVEY." This survey will ask you to identify the extent that you experienced a positive shift in mood, and an assortment of potential emotional responses.

Note: The lab is not complete until the survey has been submitted.

Thanks to….

- Now that you have reached the last slide, take a moment and assess how you feel.
- More relaxed?
- More positive?
- Healthier?
- More focused?
- Happier?