



OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION

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Mississippi Trees Identification App Released

Jackson, Miss. – In honor of Arbor Day and Tree Planting Week in Mississippi, the Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC) is proud to announce the release of our new *Mississippi Trees* app. Available for download on both Android (Google Play Store), and iPhone (App Store) mobile devices.

The *Mississippi Trees* app is an adaptation of our popular *Mississippi Trees* identification handbook prepared for the MFC by the Department of Forestry at Mississippi State University. *Mississippi Trees* is not intended as a textbook on dendrology or tree identification. It was prepared for the citizens of Mississippi as an aid to identification of the common trees occurring in Mississippi, and to give useful information about each tree species. The *Mississippi Trees* app is **free of charge** to the public. It was made possible by a grant from the USDA Forest Service and developed by U.S. Next.

Common tree identification is a necessity for those who work in forestry and related fields. The forestry and forest product industry represents a large economic benefit to the state of Mississippi. Forestry has a \$12.3 billion economic impact on the state of Mississippi and represents almost 70,000 jobs. Sixty-four percent of Mississippi's total land area is covered in forested acres and timber is second only to poultry in terms of agricultural production values in Mississippi.

Tree identification is also helpful for those who simply enjoy the woods for recreational or aesthetic reasons, being able to identify the trees they encounter enhances their experience. It is our desire that this app will be beneficial to both the forestry professional and the recreational user. This app provides a convenient alternative to the printed *Mississippi Trees* handbook and allows people to reference the materials in the handbook from their mobile devices at any time.

Arbor Day became an official day of observance in Mississippi in 1926. Later, the second Friday in February was firmly adopted as the day on which the state would annually observe Arbor Day. February 12-19, 2016 is also Tree Planting Week in Mississippi as designated by Governor Phil Bryant's Arbor Day / Tree Planting Week Proclamation.

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