

REPORT

European Champion Tree Forum 8th Meeting

Potsdam and Berlin, Germany
Thursday 23th to Sunday 26th May 2019



THE ITINERARY

Thursday 23rd May

Those who arrived early had the opportunity to visit the Botanical Garden in Berlin-Dahlem; Achim Förster gave explanations. That excursion was not a part of the official ECTF program.



On our way in the Sanssouci Palace Gardens ...

The 8th ECTF meeting was then officially opened in the evening at 19:00 hrs with the traditional "Secretary's Drink" at the Mövenpick Restaurant in the Sanssouci Park, our anchorage for four days. The rest of the evening was filled with a casual get-together.

Friday 24th May

We spent most of the day in the Botanical Garden in Potsdam with an in-depth guided tour by curator Dr Michael Burkart, starting in the morning at 9:00 hrs.

From 10:30 hrs onwards there were alternatives:

- The Botanical Garden at work (Dr Michael Burkart)
- Tour of Sanssouci Palace grounds (Claas Fischer)

In the afternoon at 13:30 hrs we all met in the lecture hall for presentations and talks.

The schedule was as follows:

- | | |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 13:30 hrs | <u>Herbert F. Gruber</u>
Champion Tree of the year in Germany |
| 13:45 hrs | <u>Myles Ritchie</u>
Heritage Trees:
Establishing criteria for the increased awareness and protection
of these unique specimens |
| 14:15 hrs | <u>Andrea Maroè</u>
Giant Trees of Italy |
| 14:45 hrs | <u>Marc Meyer</u>
"Apadrino un Olivo", Spanish initiative on the adoption of olive trees in
Spain.
<u>Gordon Mackenthun</u>
In search of the big old elms in the Leipzig Floodplain Forest
<u>Rob McBride</u>
European Tree of the Year,
Trees Under Threat |
| 15:30 hrs | Coffee break |
| 16:15 hrs | <u>David Alderman</u>
Update on the Tree Register
<u>Luboš Úradníček</u>
Update on current projects
<u>Jeroen Philippona</u>
The Bomenstichting – latest developments;
Amsterdam and surrounds: Location for the next ECTF meeting |
| 17:15 hrs | <u>Gordon Mackenthun</u>
Assorted questions concerning the European Champion Tree Forum <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future of the ECTF website• Financial issues• ECTF activities |

17:45 hrs Frank Gyßling

Photographic impressions of the Prussian Palaces and Gardens

The program for the day ended at 18:00 hrs.

Saturday 25th May

Starting at 9:00 hrs, Claas Fischer gave us on a tour of the Sanssouci Garden and Park, covering most of the champion trees in the area.

The trees we encountered were the following:

Botanical name	English name	year of planting	girth at breast height (cm) 2017	notes [biggest trees by girth at breast height]
Ulmus americana	American elm	1847	379	
Halesia carolina	Carolina silverbell	1998	52	
Pyrus salicifolia	Willow-leaved pear	1998	24	
Chionanthus virginicus	White fringetree		-	
Cercis siliquastrum	Judas tree	1998	123*	
Torreya nucifera	Japanese nutmeg-yew	1972	107	
Liriodendron tulipifera	Tulip tree	1903	267	biggest & tallest tulip tree in Potsdam
Phellodendron amurense	Amur cork tree	1903	171	biggest cork tree in Potsdam
Carya cordiformis	Bitternut	1903	280	biggest hickory in Potsdam
Quercus x turneri	Turner's oak	1850	223	biggest turner's oak in Potsdam
Catalpa bignonioides	Southern catalpa	1790	-	oldest catalpa in Potsdam
Taxodium distichum	Swamp cypress	1830	764**	biggest swamp cypress in Germany
Aesculus flava	Yellow buckeye	1999	59*	
Fagus sylvatica 'Pendula'	Weeping beech	1836	384*	one in the oldest weeping beeches in Germany
Pinus nigra	Black pine		423	biggest pine in Potsdam
Platanus acerifolia	London plane	1830	602**	biggest plane in Potsdam

Celtis occidentalis	American hackberry		210	biggest hackberry in Potsdam
Carpinus betulus	European hornbeam		498*	
Quercus macranthera	Persian oak		141	
Quercus imbricaria	Shingle oak	2005	105	
Pterocarya fraxinifolia	Caucasian wingnut		162	
Styphnolobium japonica	Japanese pagoda tree	1905	298	biggest pagoda tree in Potsdam
Ginkgo biloba	Ginkgo tree	1862	440	biggest ginkgo tree in Potsdam
Cercidiphyllum japonicum	Katsura	1887	424*	

* girth measured at surface level; ** measured in 2019

For more details please refer to these two books:

- Claas Fischer und Frank Gyßling (2015): Bäume in Potsdam. Edition Terra ("Trees of Potsdam")
- Claas Fischer (2018): Gehölze in Potsdam und Umgebung. Edition Terra ("Woody Plants of Potsdam and Surroundings")



Sanssouci Palace and Palace Garden

The tour ended at Friedenskirche at 12:00 hrs.

We had a rustic lunch break at the "Wirtshaus zur Pfaueninsel" and in due time entered the ferry to the Pfaueninsel ("Peacock Island"). There, Dr Jan Stegner and Nico Klöhn gave us a guided tour with an emphasis on wood-dwelling beetles and selected arboricultural issues.

The program for the day ended at 18:00 hrs.

Sunday 26th May

Some guests had to leave early for their trip home. To those with a more generous time budget we offered a visit to Glienicke.

Coming from downtown Potsdam we visited Glienicker Park with Böttcherberg and Glienicke Palace, part of the World Heritage Site and one of the finest examples of classical landscaping in this country. Again, Achim Förster guided our rather leisurely walk in the park.



On "Pfaueninsel" (Peacock Island)

Lunch snacks and beverages were available in the historical "Garage du Pont" close to Glienicker Park.

Saying our good-byes the 2019 ECTF meeting ended in good spirits, promises to come to Amsterdam next year and with a lot of backslapping.

A RECAPITULATION

*Myles Ritchie and Cassandra Butler;
Department of Geography and Environment, University of Hawaii at
Manoa*

European Champion Tree Forum 2019 Recap

The 2019 ECTF meeting was an experience like no other, especially for those coming from half a world away. Initially, we were not sure how we would be received but from its onset on the opening night of the meeting, we were welcomed with open arms by some of the most knowledgeable and passionate tree enthusiasts we have ever had the pleasure to encounter.

Throughout the multiple day experience, there were ample opportunities to develop invaluable connections and share best practices and recommended changes from all of the programs in attendance. One of the most interesting aspects of this dissemination of knowledge was how similar each program was, with strikingly comparable stories, specifically when discussing the hardships that often accompany working on a program focused around champion trees. The tours and their associated guides were also informative throughout the entire process and provided numerous fascinating facts and concepts.

The presentations featuring various programs from across Europe, in addition to being able to show how Hawaii manages its exceptional tree program, was also one of the highlights from the meeting. It was inspiring to see the range of ways in which champion trees are promoted across Europe and how some of these components could be exported to Hawaii.

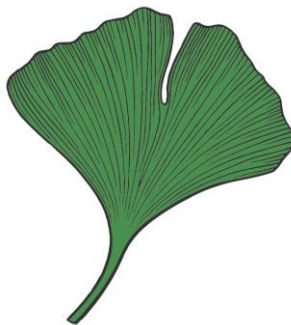
However, while the event was well worth the long journey, some potential constructive criticism can be found when reviewing the duration of each day, the short breaks (or lack thereof on some days) and the choice for dinner. While each day was fascinating, it would have been ideal to end earlier and allow for a larger break before dinner. This would allow each participant to have additional time to change, relax and then progress to the dinner venue. In addition to this, while the Mövenpick restaurant was a wonderful choice, it would have been more desirable to have dinner at a different location one of the nights, or instead, allow one night off for the participants to choose a destination of their own that may have been a more affordable.

In the end, the ECTF 2019 meeting was truly an incredible event that helped forge lifelong relationships. As such, we truly appreciated the invitation to meet such a pleasant group of tree lovers and are looking forward to attending the next iteration in Amsterdam.

The next ECTF meeting is scheduled to take place in The Netherlands, Wednesday 17th to Sunday 20th September 2020. Details will follow.

Dr Gordon L Mackenthun
ECTF secretary (hon)

The 8th meeting of the European Champion Tree Forum was supported by the Botanischer Garten der Universität Potsdam and the Deutsche Dendrologische Gesellschaft.



**Deutsche
Dendrologische
Gesellschaft e.V.**
gegründet 1892