

Trees of the Pipeline Trail



Image credit: Washington Rock Quarries

“The Pipeline Trail will extend from the Tacoma Dome Transit Center into Downtown Tacoma through East Tacoma, then to the southwest through unincorporated Pierce County to the South Hill area and a new Pierce County Parks’ property, 100 Acre Woods. The trail will then join the Foothills Trail extending on to Mt. Rainier National Park. “- Puyallup Watershed Initiative Active Transportation Community of Interest

The 1.4 mile Pipeline Trail segment in Tacoma from the Eastside Community Center on E 56th St to E 72nd St has hundreds of young trees of many different species, as well as mature areas of towering Douglas fir, western hemlock, western red cedar, and big leaf maple in the areas on the east side of the trail, near Swan Creek Park. Each of the trees planted along the trail offer unique characteristics in their appearance, benefits ranging from providing shade to slowing stormwater to acting as homes for birds and wildlife, and have been selected for suitability in our climate as well as urban tolerance. Because of this, not every tree along the trail is native to Western Washington. There are trees with native ranges from Japan to the Himalayas to the Balkans.

As you travel along the trail, see if you can spot all 13 species of trees described below.

Directions: Start your tree tour from the Eastside Community Center at 1721 E 56th St, Tacoma, WA 98404. Follow the path southeast from E 56th St to E 72nd St.

Tree #	Common Name (Botanical Name)	Characteristics and Random Facts	Photos	
1	Douglas fir (<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>)	<p>Mature Size: 60'H x 20'W Native Range: W Coast North America, BC to California Urban Tolerance: Drought and heat</p> <p>The state tree of Oregon. One of the world's most important and valuable timber trees. Forked-cone bracts distinguish this tree from all other conifers. Cones are said to look like little mice are hanging out.</p>		
2	Oregon "Garry" white oak (<i>Quercus garryana</i>)	<p>Mature Size: 60'H x 40'W Native Range: W Coast North America, SW BC to N California Urban Tolerance: Drought</p> <p>Garry oak is the only native oak species in Washington. Garry oak forests support a diverse landscape and the variety of habitats allows many more species to live in this area than would be possible in evergreen forest alone.</p>		
3	Deodar cedar (<i>Cedrus deodara</i>)	<p>Mature Size: 70'H x 40'W Native Range: Himalayas from Afghanistan to India Urban Tolerance: Drought</p> <p>Its graceful form means it's often planted as an ornamental tree in parks and gardens. The cones of the female are barrel-shaped and quite large. Deodar oil is used in incense and as an insect repellent.</p>		
4	Serbian spruce (<i>Picea omorika</i>)	<p>Mature Size: 50'H x 15'W Native Range: Serbia, Bosnia Urban Tolerance: Highly adaptable</p> <p>While widely cultivated, its native range is a tiny slice along the Drina River Valley in western Serbia and eastern Bosnia.</p>		
5	Ponderosa pine (<i>Pinus ponderosa</i>)	<p>Mature Size: 75'H x 25'W Native Range: Western North America Urban Tolerance: Alkaline soils, drought, road salts</p> <p>The bark emits a sweet smell that resembles vanilla. The Scottish botanist David Douglas named this pine for its ponderous (heavy) wood. The ponderosa pine provided canoes for Lewis and Clark after they crossed the Rockies.</p>		
6	Coast redwood (<i>Sequoia sempervirens</i>)	<p>Mature Size: 50'H x 20'W Native Range: Fog belt from N. California to S. Oregon</p> <p>The tallest growing trees on Earth, in their native habitat they can live for over 1,000 years. The tallest living redwoods would stick out above the roof of a 35-story skyscraper. Fossil records have shown that relatives of coast redwoods thrived in the Jurassic Era ~160 million years ago.</p>		

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7	Western larch (<i>Larix occidentalis</i>)	<p>Mature Size: 60'H x 20'W Native Range: Northwestern US and Canada Urban Tolerance: Needs well drained soil, but very cold tolerant</p> <p>A tree that draws crowds in the eastern Cascades, its needle-like leaves turn a bright yellow before falling off each fall.</p>		
8	Limber pine (<i>Pinus flexilis</i>)	<p>Mature Size: 40'H x 25'W Native Range: Rocky Mountains Urban Tolerance: Very adaptable</p> <p>Popular as an ornamental tree, its soft needles and full branch structure make an excellent windbreak when grouped together.</p>		
9	Austrian pine (<i>Pinus nigra</i>)	<p>Mature Size: 60'H x 35'W Native Range: S. Europe and Turkey Urban Tolerance: Very adaptable</p> <p>Beginning in 1934, over 217 million Austrian pines were planted as part of the Great Plains Shelterbelt to protect against severe dust storms during the Dust Bowl.</p>		
10	Japanese red pine (<i>Pinus densiflora</i>)	<p>Mature Size: 50'H x 40'W Native Range: Japan, Korea, NE China Urban Tolerance: N/A</p> <p>In Japan it's known as <i>akamatsu</i> and is an important feature in the classic Japanese garden. The trunk is often twisted or slightly crooked.</p>		
11	Japanese white pine (<i>Pinus parviflora</i>)	<p>Mature Size: 30'H x 30'W Native Range: Japan, Korea, E. Asia Urban Tolerance: Road salt</p> <p>Dense and slow-growing, very easy to identify. When young, it produces lots of cones. Like the Japanese red pine, the trunk is often crooked.</p>		
12	Leyland cypress (<i>Cupressus x leylandii</i>)	<p>Mature Size: 60'H x 20'W Native Range: A hybrid originating in Wales around 1888 Urban Tolerance: Salt, acidic soils, clay</p> <p>Often seen in landscaping as a screen or hedge. Very fast growing. Due to its popularity, this tree is found all over Europe and North America.</p>		

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13	Rocky mountain juniper <i>(Juniperus scopulorum)</i>	<p>Mature Size: 40'H x 15'W</p> <p>Native Range: Rocky Mountains</p> <p>Urban Tolerance: Acidic soils, cold</p> <p>The leaves of Rocky Mountain juniper were used by the Blackfeet, Cheyenne, Nez Perce, Kutenai, and Sioux peoples to make teas. Dried berries can be ground into a coffee substitute.</p>	