

Singapore's Common Trees

In **Singapore**, green is a pervasive colour. With extensive networks of tree-lined roads and park connectors linking up parks, nature reserves and green spaces, Singapore is an urban forest. Existing alongside our concrete skyscrapers, modern buildings and houses are over **2000** recorded native plant species. We have about two million trees planted on roadsides, in parks and in nature areas.

Forests and trees play important roles in our living environment; they clean the air by absorbing carbon dioxide, lower the ambient and surface temperature with the shade they provide, and reduce soil erosion.

Do you know that more than **5,000** products, including herbal medicines, fuel, food, furniture, clothing and more, come from forest materials?

Find out more about some of Singapore's common trees here:



Rain Tree

The Rain Tree can easily be identified by its big umbrella-shaped crown. The leaves have a habit of folding up at dusk and before rainy weather, hence its name. When the Rain Tree blooms, the crown is covered in clusters of pink-white flowers.

There is a large Rain Tree in the Singapore Botanic Gardens with a girth of 5 metres and a height of 32 metres. It is classified as one of Singapore's heritage trees.

Tembusu

The Tembusu can grow up to **40** metres in height and can be recognised by its dark brown bark and unique perpendicular branching. During the flowering season, its creamy white flowers open at sunset and give off a strong fragrance in the evening.

The finest Tembusu in the Singapore Botanic Gardens is featured on the back of the \$5 note. This heritage tree is reportedly more than 150 years old.



Angsana

The Angsana is a large tree that grows up to **40** metres tall and can be recognised by its drooping, dome-shaped crown. This tree has yellow flowers that are mildly fragrant. They bloom for only a day, and then rain down the next morning, creating yellow carpets on the ground.

A 60-year-old Angsana heritage tree, with a girth of 7.7 metres, can be found on the road verge of Upper Serangoon Road.



Yellow Flame

The Yellow Flame grows up to **20** metres tall. It is a popular tree for roadside planting. It is drought-resistant, which makes it well adapted to Singapore's hot and sunny weather conditions. This tree has a wide-spreading, umbrella-shaped crown, which provides excellent shade.

When the tree flowers, brilliant yellow blossoms cover the entire crown and give off a light fragrance.



Part 2



Saga

The Saga Tree has distinctive fruit pods, and its scarlet seeds are known for their uniform weight: **4** seeds make up **1** gram. The seeds were widely used in the past as weight measures for gold and silver.

One popular tree at the Singapore Botanic Gardens is the Saga Tree, found near the Lady on a Hammock sculpture.

Sea Almond

The Sea Almond or Ketapang can be recognised by its distinctive pagoda shape. This tree has large leaves that turn yellow, orange and then red when they are about to shed.

The leaves have an anti-bacterial effect. They are used in aquariums to promote the health of fish, and provide a calming effect.

Changi Coast Road is lined on both sides with Sea Almond trees. These trees can also be found in East Coast Park.



Sea Apple

The Sea Apple can grow up to **30** metres in height. It is a robust tree with large white flowers arranged in compact clusters with showy stamens.

The Sea Apple Tree does not burn easily, and it used to be planted extensively as firebreaks, at a time when our roads were bordered by highly flammable lalang wastelands.

Sea Apple trees are commonly found along coastal roads such as Changi Coast Road and East Coast Road.



Trumpet Tree

The Trumpet Tree grows up to a height of between **18** and **25** metres tall, and has a large, broadly conical and shady crown. It is thus named because of its large trumpet-shaped flowers, which range in colour from pink to white. This tree is known for its impressive flowering display, usually in April and August after a dry spell, where the entire tree is spectacularly covered in blossoms.

When the flowers fall, they retain their colour for a couple of days, forming a beautiful carpet around the tree.



Senegal Mahogany

The Senegal Mahogany is a fast-growing evergreen tree. It can grow to more than **30** metres in height with a girth of **1** - **2** metres. It has a straight cylindrical trunk, with buttresses at the base and a large bushy crown which provides good shade.

The Senegal Mahogany has compound leaves which are made up of leaflets that are glossy dark green on the upper side and light green on the underside. It has clusters of small white flowers that give way to round fruits. The fruits split open to release numerous brown winged seeds that are dispersed by wind.



Broad-leafed Mahogany

The Broad-leafed Mahogany is a large hardwood tree that can grow up to **30** metres or more in height. It can easily be recognised by its crown, which is dense, dark green and ranges from round to oblong in shape.

Its leaves turn from pink to dark green, and then become orange-brown to scarlet as they wither. The most distinctive feature of this tree is its large heavy brown fruit pods. These split into five valves to release flat, winged and light-brown seeds.

