

Tree Walk #4: Start at Animal Acres Park

This somewhat longer walk follows the course of McAleer Creek, then climbs over the watershed divide into the Lyon Creek drainage. While interesting individual trees abound, the neighborhoods traversed typify the native forest character that lies at the heart of Lake Forest Park's psyche. **DISTANCE: 1.8 MILES**

Begin your walk at the fountain in Animal Acres Park. Go north to the corner and cross 178th NE, continuing north on 180th NE...Be doubly vigilant on this next section of you walk. The road shoulder is wide enough for safe walking, but pay attention to oncoming traffic.

In Eagle Scout Park there are several **flowering crabapples** (*Malus* sp.) along the frontage of 180th, with a good example of the pendant form of **European birch** (*Betula pendula*) in the middle of the lawn.

At 3722 (r), built in 1913, you can spot several interesting trees. On the north corner of the entry drive, the dark foliage is a 15' tall **European smoke tree** (*Cotinus coggygria*). To its left is a **western red cedar** (*Thuja plicata* (N)) and behind that is a very large specimen of **English oak** (*Quercus robur*). Also just inside the entryway, growing in the raised planter bed, is a massive western white pine (*Pinus monicola* (N)).

At 3715 (l), on the south corner of the driveway is another **crabapple** (*Malus* sp) with unusually large, somewhat elongate red fruit in season.

At 3706 (r): a row of **Lombardy poplar** (*Populus nigra* 'Italica') line the frontage.

At 3709 (l): on the near corner on the street is a dark-leaf form of **Japanese maple** (*Acer palmatum*).

Opposite 3703, across the street on the slope is a large **black cottonwood** (*Populus trichocarpa* (N)) with three major trunks.

At 3577 (l): seven large western red cedars fill the front yard. At the far end past the bamboo hedge, a **weeping willow** (*Salix babylonica*) hangs over the street shoulder.

At 3575 (l) several large **vine maples** (*Acer circinatum* (N)) can be seen behind the fence and hedgerow of laurels.

At 3557 (l) there is a good group of **red cedars** and **Douglas fir** (*Pseudotsuga menziesii* (N)).

As you continue, the right side of the street is undeveloped; a slope covered with mixed native forest trees. Practice your at-a-distance identification skills by sorting out **Douglas fir**, **western red cedar**, **western hemlock** (*Tsuga heterophylla* (N)), **Bigleaf** (*Acer macrophyllum* (N)) and **vine maples**. There will be many more examples of all of these trees as you continue the walk.

At the driveway to 3525 (l) is an unusually large (42"+) Douglas fir, nicely limbed up to reveal the massive trunk.

At 3519 (l): two large **English elms** (*Ulmus procera*) flank the driveway and overhang the street. At the north end of the lot are several large **western hemlocks** close to the street where you can examine the thin platy bark pattern of maturity.

*Just beyond, you get the first direct view of McAleer Creek as it swings close to the road embankment. This hemlock shaded section must look much as the entire creek would have appeared in the 19th century prior to logging, if you can look past the non-native English ivy and laurel...Just ahead, the walk breaks out of the forest and the view opens to include both slopes of the McAleer Creek valley. The horizon is largely define by **Douglas fir**...*

At 3305, just before the intersection, in the lawn at the far end of the porch is a 20-foot **monkey-puzzle tree** (*Araucaria araucana*).

*At 33rd Avenue, continue straight. The walk continues alongside the creek, entering the narrow 'canyon' section through young woodlands primarily of **red alder** (*Alnus rubra* (N))...continue to 182nd Street and turn right.*

As you approach the corner at 2906 (r), a well shaped 12"+ diameter **tulip tree** (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) highlights the front yard.

At 2933 33rd Avenue (r) there is a 20+ foot tall **horsechestnut** (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) on the bank next to the street.

*At 30th Avenue, look left...about one hundred feet down on the right side is a tall **western white pine** ...You will see several more of this native species along the next section of the walk.*

At 3017 (r): a purple leaved cultivar of **Norway maple** (*Acer platanoides*), behind the fence and just before the private cul-de-sac.

On the left, on the NW corner of the intersection with 33rd Avenue, another very large **white pine**. On the SE corner of the intersection is an 9"+ **western dogwood** (*Cornus nuttallii* (N)) tucked in below a large **Douglas fir**.

At 3320 (l): yet another large **white pine**.

As you continue down the street, the slopes fall away to the east to Lyon Creek. You have moved into this watershed from the McAleer drainage as you crested the hill behind you on 182nd Street. These two creek systems comprise the vast majority of the natural drainage of LFP. Prior to the construction of the Town Center mall, both streams fed into a large wetland before flowing gently into Lake Washington...

Just past 3320 on the left is a heavily treed lot with large **Douglas fir** and **western white pine**.

At 3323 (r) is a home built in 1918. In the NW part of the yard near the street is a large **European beech** (*Fagus sylvatica*). In the south lawn is another large **white pine**. Western white pines favor deep, well-drained soils, so the presence of so many mature pines in this neighborhood may indicate that the underlying soils are sandy Indianola soils. In the back yard behind the pine can be seen the blue-green conical forms of two **giant sequoias** (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*).

At 3356 (l): at the north end is a beautifully shaped **magnolia** (*Magnolia* sp). Further along, flanking the driveway are two columnar Colorado spruce (*Picea pungens*).

Two trees are worth noting at the intersection of 35th Avenue. There is a **western dogwood** on the NW corner near the hydrant and a large **Douglas fir** on the NE corner at 18208.

*You continue along 182nd through a very woody section dominated by large native conifers with an understory of **western dogwood**, shrubby **western hazelnut** (*Corylus cornuta* (N)) and introduced garden plants...Several homes in the 3500 and 3800 blocks were constructed prior to 1920 and feature large older trees nurtured through the years...*

3550 (I): there is a hedgerow of **white pines** along the frontage.

At the intersection with 40th Avenue NE, continue downhill to the right, now on 40th Avenue...

At 17856 (I): observe the large **Douglas firs** which were topped many years ago resulting in top-sprout regrowth which are outsized in their own right.

At 77846 (I): an **atlas cedar** (*Cedrus atlantica* 'Glauca') hangs over the street.

On the corner at 3006 178th Street (I): there is a 16" **English walnut** (*Juglans regia*) on the street as well as a 20"+ **European beech** and 18" **red oak** (*Quercus rubra*) behind the fence.

At the intersection with 178th Street, turn right and continue back to Animal Acres Park...If you're still game for more trees, there are some at the park and at the church across the street which are worth a few more minutes...Starting again at the fountain in the park, walk south parallel to Brookside Boulevard...

The churchyard (I) is dominated by large **Douglas firs**. At the NW corner of the complex, a **giant sequoia** and a **coast redwood** (*Sequoia sempervirens*) sit side-by-side, so you can compare the differences in growth habit and foliage of these two closely related trees. The church entry

door is flanked by an **evergreen magnolia** (*Magnolia grandiflora*) and an **eastern dogwood** (*Cornus florida*). There are two more large **eastern dogwoods** in the courtyard on the left.

The park frontage on Brookside has several unhappy **common hawthorns** (*Crataegus monogyna*) and numerous **Bigleaf maples**. In the lawn are **Douglas firs** of various sizes up to 36"+ diameter.

Cross through the lawn to the fence overlooking McAleer Creek. Here the last two years have witnessed a significant shift in the streambed. In the winter of 2004 a mature Douglas fir that had been leaning over the creek for years was finally undercut and fell across the creek. This rerouted flows, both at high and average stages, which have

subsequently felled two more large trees from the near bank and apparently drowned the still-standing cedar on the far flats...Walk north along the fence and observe...

A multi-trunked **vine maple** just behind the fence, several **hemlocks** (to 16") on both side of the fence, and a good cross section of our native forest trees downslope in the woods. Here is a further chance to refine your identification skills for these trees: **western red cedars**, **western dogwood**, **hazelnut**, **paper birch** and **alder**. The observation deck overlooking the stream is surrounded by young **red alder**. Further along the fence, you pass under two splendid **Bigleaf maples**, among the finest in the city. Behind the maples is a good-sized **cascara** (*Rhamnus pershiana* (N)), the last 'new' native tree species of this walk. Also between the fence and the creek, you can see young **cedars** and **hemlocks**, part of a restoration planting to improve the future forest character along the creek corridor.