



Arbor Week and Trees of the Year

A Brief History of Arbor Day

Arbor Day originated in 1872 in the United States territory of Nebraska. Mr. J. Sterling Morton, a newcomer to the treeless plains of Nebraska, was a keen proponent of the beauty and benefit of trees. He persuaded the local agricultural board to set aside a day for planting trees and through his position as editor of Nebraska's first newspaper, encouraged participation in the event by publishing articles on the value of trees for soil protection, fruit, shade and building. Mr. Morton's home, known as Arbor Lodge, was a testament to his love for trees and so inspired the name of the holiday; Arbor Day. Within two decades Arbor Day was celebrated in every US State and territory, and eventually spread around the world. The tradition continues annually in the second week of August, in global acknowledgment of Mr. Morton's slogan, "other holidays repose upon the past; Arbor Day proposes for the future."

In South Africa, Arbor Day was first celebrated in 1983. The event captured the imagination of people who recognised the need for raising awareness of the value of trees in our society. As sources of building material, food, medicine, and simple scenic beauty, trees play a vital role in the health and well-being of our communities. Collective enthusiasm for the importance of this issue in South Africa inspired the national government, in 1999, to extend the celebration of Arbor Day to National Arbor Week. From 1 to 7 September every year, schools, businesses and organisations are encouraged to participate in community "greening" events to improve the health and beauty of the local environment and propose a green future for South Africa.

Trees of the Year 2000–2020

To help increase public awareness of just a few of the 2 000 indigenous tree species in South Africa, every Arbor Week celebration will highlight two specific trees; one common and one rare species. In the list below the more common tree is named first.

Year	Common Tree	Rare (Uncommon) Trees
2000	<u><i>Peltophorum africanum</i></u> African wattle, Huilboom	<u><i>Salix mucronata</i></u> Safsaf willow, Kaapse wilger
2001	<u><i>Loxostylis alata</i></u> Tarwood, Teerhout	<u><i>Ptaeroxylon obliquum</i></u> Sneezewood, Nieshout
2002	<u><i>Pittosporum viridiflorum</i></u>	<u><i>Alberta magna</i></u> Natal flame bush, Breekhout

	Cheesewood, Kasuur	
2003	<i>Rhus chirindensis</i> (This tree is now called <i>Searsia chirindensis</i>) Red currant, Bostaaios	<i>Pterocarpus angolensis</i> Wild teak, Kiaat
2004	<i>Kirkia acuminata</i> and <i>K. wilmsii</i> White seringa, Mountain seringa, Witsering, Bergsering	<i>Combretum bracteosum</i> Hiccup nut, Hikklimop
2005	<i>Schefflera umbellifera</i> False cabbage tree, Basterkiepersol	<i>Adansonia digitata</i> Baobab, Kremetart
2006	<i>Burchellia bubalina</i> Wild pomegranate, Wildegranaat	<i>Raphia australis</i> Kosi palm, Kosipalm
2007	<i>Rhus pyroides</i> (This tree is now known as <i>Searsia pyroides</i>) Common wild currant, Gewone Taaibos	<i>Pavetta schumanniana</i> Poison Bride's Bush, Gifbruidbos
2008	<i>Harpephyllum caffrum</i> Wild plum, Wildepruim	<i>Diospyros whyteana</i> Bladder-nut, Swartbas <i>Markhamia zanzibarica</i> Bell bean tree, Klokkies-boontjieboom
2009	<i>Acacia galpinii</i> Money thorn, Apiesdoring	<i>Halleria lucida</i> Tree fuchsia, Notsung <i>Pterocarpus rotundifolius</i> Round-leaved Teak, Dopperkiaan
2010	<i>Acacia xanthophloea</i> Fever tree, Koorsboom	<i>Rothmannia capensis</i> Cape gardenia, Kaapse Katjiepiering <i>Rothmannia globosa</i> Bell gardenia, Klokkies-Katjiepiering <i>Cladostemon kirkii</i> Tonga-kerrie, Tongakerrie
2011	<i>Pappea capensis</i> Jacket-plum, Doppruim	<i>Genus Pavetta</i> Bride's Bushes, Bruidsbome <i>Nuxia congesta</i> Common Wild Elder, Gewone wildevlier
2012	<i>Syzygium cordatum</i> Water berry, Waterbessie	<i>Protorus longifolia</i> Red Beech, Rooiboekenhout <i>Bruguiera gymnorhiza</i> Black Mangrove, Swart-wortelboom

2013	<u><i>Virgilia oroboides</i></u> Blossom tree, Keurboom	<u><i>Grewia occidentalis</i></u> Cross-berry, Kruisbessie <u><i>Barringtonia racemosa</i></u> Powder-puff Tree, Poeierkwas-boom
2014	Genus <i>Heteropyxis</i> Lavender trees, Laventelbome <u><i>H.canescens</i></u> , <u><i>H. natalensis</i></u>	<u><i>Vepris lanceolata</i></u> White ironwood, Witysterhout
2015	<u><i>Combretum kraussii</i></u> Forest bushwillow, Bosvaderlandswilg	<u><i>Heteromorpha arborescens</i></u> Parsley tree, Wildepieterseliebos
2016	<i>Ficus thonningii</i> Common wild fig, Gewone wildevy	<u><i>Maerua cafra</i></u> Common bush-cherry, Gewone witbos <i>Maerua angolensis</i> Bead- bean tree, Knoppiesboontjieboom
2017	<u><i>Ziziphus mucronata</i></u> Hairy buffalo-thorn, Harige blinkblaar wag-n-bietjie	<i>Euclea pseudebenus</i> Ebony tree, Ebbeboom
2018	Genus <i>Podocarpus</i> Yellowwoods, Geelhoutbome <u><i>P. elongatus</i></u> , <u><i>P. falcatus</i></u> , <u><i>P. henkelii</i></u> , <u><i>P. latifolius</i></u>	<u><i>Boscia albitrunca</i></u> Shepherd's tree, Witgat
2019	<u><i>Sclerocarya birrea</i></u> Marula Maroela	<u><i>Philenoptera violacea</i></u> Apple-leaf, Appelblaar
2020	<u><i>Ekebergia capensis</i></u> Cape ash, Essenhout	<u><i>Adansonia digitata</i></u> Baobab, Kremetart

(Information provided by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry. January 2008)

Trees of the Year 1975–1998

1975 *Podocarpus* – yellowwood species
(Here are some that we have on our database)

- [*P. elongatus*](#)
- [*P. falcatus*](#)

- [P. henkelii](#)
 - [P. latifolius](#)
- 1976 *Pinus* species – pine trees
- 1977 [Celtis africana](#) – white stinkwood
- 1978 *Eucalyptus* species – gum trees
- 1979 none
- 1980 *Ocotea* species – stinkwood
(Here is one that we have on our database)
- [\(Ocotea bullata\)](#)
- 1981 *Acacia* species – thorn trees
(Here are some that we have on our database)
- [Acacia ataxacantha](#)
 - [Acacia caffra](#)
 - [Acacia erioloba](#)
 - [Acacia galpinii](#)
 - [Acacia hebeclada subsp. hebeclada](#)
 - [Acacia karroo](#)
 - [Acacia mellifera subsp. detinens](#)
 - [Acacia nigrescens](#)
 - [Acacia nilotica subsp. kraussiana](#)
 - [Acacia polyacantha](#)
 - [Acacia sieberiana var. woodii](#)
 - [Acacia tortilis](#)
 - [Acacia xanthophloea](#)
- 1982 *Erythrina* species – coral trees
(Here are some that we have on our database)
- [Erythrina acanthocarpa](#)
 - [Erythrina caffra](#)
 - [Erythrina humeana](#)
 - [Erythrina latissima](#)
 - [Erythrina lysistemon](#)
 - [Erythrina zeyheri](#)
- 1983 *Rhus* species – karee species (Now known as *Searsia* species)
(Here are some that we have on our database)
- [Searsia batophylla](#)
 - [Searsia chirindensis](#)
 - [Searsia ciliata](#)
 - [Searsia crenata](#)
 - [Searsia dentata](#)
 - [Searsia discolor](#)
 - [Searsia erosa](#)
 - [Searsia lancea](#)
 - [Searsia leptodictya](#)
 - [Searsia magalismontana subsp. magalismontana](#)
 - [Searsia pendulina](#)
 - [Searsia pyroides](#)

1984 *Ficus* species – wild figs

(Here are some that we have on our database)

- [*Ficus abutilifolia*](#)
- [*Ficus ingens*](#)
- [*Ficus lutea*](#)
- [*Ficus sansibarica*](#)
- [*Ficus sur*](#)
- [*Ficus trichopoda*](#)

1985 *Bauhinia* species

(Here are some that we have on our database)

- [*Bauhinia bowkeri*](#)
- [*Bauhinia galpinii*](#)
- [*Bauhinia natalensis*](#)
- [*Bauhinia tomentosa*](#)

1986 *Protea* species

(Here are some that we have on our database)

- [*Protea angustata*](#)
- [*Protea aurea subsp. potbergensis*](#)
- [*Protea burchellii*](#)
- [*Protea caffra*](#)
- [*Protea compacta*](#)
- [*Protea cordata*](#)
- [*Protea coronata*](#)
- [*Protea cynaroides*](#)
- [*Protea eximia*](#)
- [*Protea laetans*](#)
- [*Protea lanceolata*](#)
- [*Protea laurifolia*](#)
- [*Protea lepidocarpodendron*](#)
- [*Protea magnifica*](#)
- [*Protea neriifolia*](#)
- [*Protea nitida*](#)
- [*Protea obtusifolia*](#)
- [*Protea repens*](#)
- [*Protea rubropilosa*](#)
- [*Protea susannae*](#)
- [*Protea scolymocephala*](#)
- [*Protea stokoei*](#)

1987 *Cussonia* species – cabbage trees

(Here are some that we have on our database)

- [*Cussonia paniculata*](#)
- [*Cussonia spicata*](#)
- [*Cussonia thyrsoiflora*](#)
- [*Cussonia transvaalensis*](#)

- 1988 *Olea* species – wild olives
(Here are some that we have on our database)
- [Olea capensis](#)
 - [Olea europaea subsp.africana](#)
- 1989 [Calodendrum capense](#) – Cape chestnut
- 1990 *Quercus* species – oaks
- 1991 *Trichilia* species – red ashes
(Here are some that we have on our database)
- [Trichilia dregeana](#)
 - [Trichilia emetica](#)
- 1992 [Dais cotinifolia](#) – pompom tree
- 1993 [Schotia brachypetala](#) – weeping boer-bean
- 1994 [Bolusanthus speciosus](#) – tree wisteria
- 1995 [Combretum erythrophyllum](#) – river bushwillow
- 1996 [Warburgia salutaris](#) – pepperbark
and [Kiggelaria africana](#) – wild peach
- 1997 [Rapanea melanophloeos](#) – Cape beech
and *Ziziphus rivularis* – false buffalo thorn
- 1998 [Apodytes dimidiata](#) – white pear
and [Greyia flanaganii](#) – Kei beacon tree

[Download a List of Protected Trees in South Africa](#)