

## Join the Hunt for Michigan's Biggest Trees

This summer, Michiganders are invited to join the adventure of searching for the biggest trees in the state! ReLeaf Michigan's Big Tree Hunt is a free, family-friendly contest that encourages getting outdoors and appreciating the incredibly large trees around us every day. The contest's deadline is August 22, 2025, making Memorial Day weekend an ideal time to go hunting for big trees! The 16th biennial Big Tree Hunt is more than a fun outdoor challenge; it's a way for Michiganders to help document, honor, and highlight the state's most impressive trees.

Learn more about the contest and enter your submissions at: [www.bigtreehunt.com](http://www.bigtreehunt.com)

### Prizes, Recognition, and a Chance to Discover a Champion

Whether you're young or young-at-heart, the Big Tree Hunt is your invitation to explore! You can join the hunt as a solo adventurer, make it a family outing, or compete with friends to see who finds the biggest tree in your area. Please note that while the tree locations are entered into the contest, they are not automatically made public.

The contest recognizes:

- The largest tree in every Michigan county
- The largest tree found by a Big Tree Hunter age 16 or older
- The largest tree found by a Big Tree Hunter age 15 or younger
- The largest White Pine (Michigan's state tree)
- Potential new state champions for specific tree species

Trees discovered during the contest help update the Michigan Champion Tree Registry and have the potential to become part of the National Champion Tree Registry. Entries are also regularly featured as the Big Tree of the Week on ReLeaf Michigan's Facebook page.

After the contest closes, ReLeaf Michigan's team will verify the measurements of the largest trees. Winning trees and their nominators will be honored in a special awards ceremony at Chippewa Nature Center in Midland on October 18, 2025. In the last contest, over 100 certificates and prizes were awarded from entries across 79 of Michigan's 83 counties.

*"Everyone has a big tree somewhere near them," said Lindsay Lights, chair of the Michigan Big Tree Hunt. "Now is the time to look, then submit your tree before the contest ends on August 22nd."*

### Contest Led by Michigan's Only Statewide Tree Planting Non-Profit

The Big Tree Hunt was started in 1993 by ReLeaf Michigan, the only 501(c)(3) statewide tree planting non-profit in Michigan. ReLeaf Michigan was founded in 1988 by a group of arborists to address the depleting tree canopy in Michigan. Over the past thirty-seven years ReLeaf Michigan has partnered with more than 700 Michigan communities to help plant more than 33,500 trees across the state.

In addition to leading volunteer community tree plantings, ReLeaf Michigan helps educate communities on the value of trees and how to properly maintain them. Studies have shown that investments in trees provide a 5:1 return for communities through the benefits they provide, many of which are often underappreciated or overlooked. The Michigan Big Tree Hunt is an extension of ReLeaf Michigan's educational efforts to help communities appreciate the value of trees.

### Make Sure Your County Is Represented

Since the multi-year contest began, trees have been submitted from 69 of Michigan's 83 counties. However, 13 counties still have not yet participated. If you live in one of the counties, we know you've got big trees - now is the time to submit them at [bigtreehunt.com](http://bigtreehunt.com)!

**Unrepresented Michigan Counties:** Baraga, Branch, Hillsdale, Lake, Luce, Menominee, Montcalm, Newaygo, Ontonagon, Osceola, Otsego, Schoolcraft, and Tuscola.

## How to Submit Your Tree

**The contest is easy to enter.** The *biggest* tree is determined by measuring the distance around the tree trunk at 4.5 feet above the ground. Michigan's biggest trees can be found anywhere, such as along the street, in a park or forest, or even in your backyard.

What you'll need:

- Measuring tool
  - Something to go all the way around a huge tree! Most people measure around the trunk by first using a string, then laying the string out and measuring the length with a tape measure.
- Phone or camera
- *Optional:* GPS locator (such as phone)

The Big Tree Hunt is only possible thanks to the support of its sponsors, especially the Platinum Sponsors: Meijer, Archangel Ancient Tree Archive, and the Consumers Energy Foundation. Additional thanks goes to other sponsors, the Michigan Botanical Foundation and the Cooper Charitable Foundation. The contest also receives in-kind support from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources - Urban and Community Forestry Program, Michigan State University, Michigan Botanical Society, and ISA Michigan.

ReLeaf Michigan is still open to additional sponsorships at the closing ceremony on October 18th. Please contact Kevin Singer at 248-408-8266 to learn about the statewide exposure a sponsor will receive in association with the contest.

More contest details, the entry form, and photos of past winners are available online at [bigtreehunt.com](http://bigtreehunt.com). Paper entry forms are also available at over 200 libraries, nature centers, state parks, and Conservation District offices.

For questions, email [bigtreehunt@releafmichigan.org](mailto:bigtreehunt@releafmichigan.org) or call (800) 642-7353. Follow ReLeaf Michigan's Facebook page for updates and to view the Big Tree of the Week.

## About ReLeaf Michigan

ReLeaf Michigan is the only statewide volunteer non-profit 501(c)(3) tree planting and education organization in Michigan. Its mission is to educate the public on the value of trees and how to properly select, plant, and maintain them. Its board is made up primarily of arborists, foresters, and researchers who are passionate about preserving one of Michigan's most significant resources: trees.

Since 1988, ReLeaf Michigan has worked with more than 700 communities across the state, planting more than 33,500 trees on public property in Michigan's cities, townships, and villages. Unlike most tree planting organizations, ReLeaf Michigan plants trees that are already substantial in size, resulting in a higher survival rate and more immediate environmental impact.

ReLeaf Michigan believes our communities are stronger when they are greener. People are healthier, the air is cleaner, infrastructure is more efficient, and the economy is stronger with trees. Visit [www.releafmichigan.org](http://www.releafmichigan.org) to learn more.