



# News Release

For more information, contact:  
Wendy Burnett  
478.751.3530  
[wburnett@gfc.state.ga.us](mailto:wburnett@gfc.state.ga.us)  
[GaTrees.org](http://GaTrees.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE...AUGUST 21, 2015**

## **COLOSSAL LIVE OAK EARNS GEORGIA 'CHAMPION TREE' STATUS**

A massive live oak tree that could be more than 300 years old has been added to Georgia's "Champion Tree" register. According to the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC), the tree stands 89-feet tall with a crown spread of 147-feet near Iron City, GA.

"The tree is spectacular," said Mark McClellan, Champion Tree Manager and Forest Specialist for the Georgia Forestry Commission. "It is especially notable because it has a single stem, as opposed to many live oaks that grow in multi-stems."

The tree was measured twice to ensure accuracy of its dimensions. The GFC and American Forests confirmed the tree is a co-champion in Georgia's Champion Tree program, earning a place next to Waycross' "Village Sentinel" live oak.

"For the state and national champion tree programs, measurements are taken on height, crown spread and circumference-at-breast-height," said McClellan. "This tree's circumference is just over 32-feet. Trees are given a total rating, and this one rates 511 points." McClellan said the Waycross live oak has a slightly higher total rating of 536.

The new co-champion live oak is named the "Spooner Oak" for the long-time Seminole county family on whose property it is located. While GFC experts say it is difficult to establish the age of the live oak species, *Quercus virginiana*, this tree could be in the 300-400 year old range. If cared for properly and severe weather doesn't strike, McClellan said it could remain healthy for many decades to come.

A YouTube video documenting early measurement proceedings can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3GSNEj-m8c>.

For more information about Georgia's Champion Tree program and services of the Georgia Forestry Commission, visit [GaTrees.org](http://GaTrees.org).

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