

# Tree Labels

All labels need to be placed so arboretum visitors can easily view them.

Several national companies sell labels or markers that come in various sizes, styles and materials. Local companies may also offer these. Labels may be handwritten, painted, engraved in plastic laminate, or photo-embossed on aluminum plates.

## Fastening Devices

Tree labels should not cause significant damage to the tree.

1. TUFC recommends the use of free-standing labels on metal or wood stakes placed adjacent to trees.
2. Labels may be hung from lateral branches by loose loops of bare or insulated wire. These will need bi-yearly inspection to prevent bark from overgrowing the wires.
3. Any label attached directly to the tree trunk will require annual inspection to prevent the bark from growing over the fastening device.

TUFC no longer recommends using stainless steel screws and springs to fasten labels to trunks, but these will not deter certification. The screws create renewed damage as they are backed out when the trunk overgrows the threads. The threads can catch the label and let the tree bark deform the label. The springs may become embedded within the bark.

The Division of Forestry recommends that aluminum nails or screws be used to fasten the labels loosely to the tree. When the trunk has almost grown over the shaft, the heads can be easily snipped off to remove labels. The label is loosely refastened with new nails/screws.

Springs behind the labels require caution and inspection because the tree bark may grow over them as well.

## Tree Names

Labels must contain both the botanical name and common name. It does not matter which is listed first or is largest on the label. Including any Family Name, Origin, or Description information on the label is optional.

Botanical names are written in italic letters or underscored, with Genus specific epithet, possibly with var. (variety), or with 'Cultivar' name.

Genus is always capitalized, specific epithet and variety name is not usually capitalized, cultivar name has first letters capitalized and enclosed by single quotes.

Examples:

*Cornus florida*, Dogwood (dogwood species type)

*Cornus florida* 'Moon', (Cultivar of the dogwood species)

*Cornus florida* var. *rubra* (Variety of the dogwood species)

## Purchased Labels:

There are several companies where arboreta can purchase labels or markers. These labels or markers come in various sizes, styles and materials.



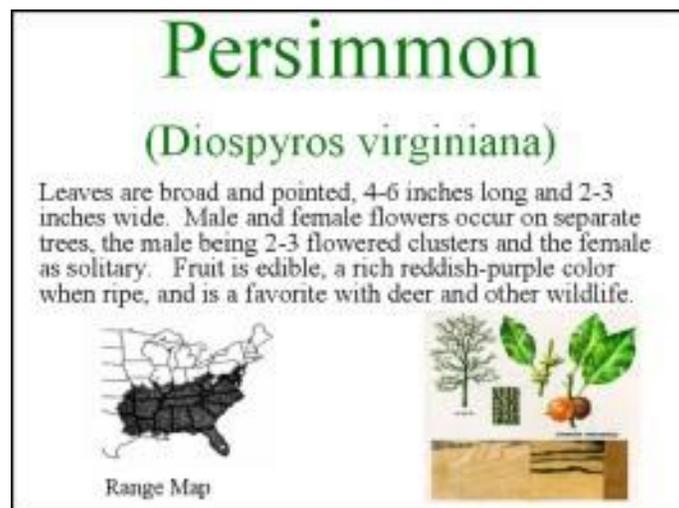
Other labels are inserted into the ground or mounted onto other material that is in the ground as demonstrated by East Tennessee State University. (Note: Stakes need to be set in quick-cement for security reasons.)

## Handmade Labels:

Several arboreta have constructed their own labels or made their own mounting devices.

### *Packaging Corporation of America Arboretum----Counce, TN*

The signs on their environmental trail are mounted on 4" x 4" treated posts. The tops are cut at a 45-degree angle for easy viewing. The posts are approximately 4' tall. The signs are encased in Plexiglas and attached to the posts by small screws. The signs are put together on 8.5" x 11" paper in PowerPoint. They used the booklet "Important Trees of the Eastern Forests", published by the United States Forest Service, for the pictures of the trees and their ranges, which are displayed below. This booklet provides information for the more common, native trees.



## *Sevier County High School ---Sevier, TN*

Students at Sevier County High School made the mounting devices for their labels. They wanted to label trees but also provide an opportunity for visitors to test their knowledge prior to viewing the tree label.

Their signs are constructed of treated pine:

- Sign base is on a 4"x 4" post, cut at a 45-degree angle to accept the sign
- Top cover is a 1 inch thick, 6"x 6" piece mounted at the back with a six-inch piano hinge onto a 2-inch-thick piece of the same size (the 2-inch piece mounted to the 4"x 4" post)
- Information sign is mounted into a routed recess of the 1-inch piece (about 3.5" x 5.25")
- The actual sign is a printed plate, mounted onto a plastic plate, and then both of those mounted into the recess of the pine base. The sign is close to the routed recess in size (3.5"x 5.25")



## **Solutions for Vandalism Problems:**

Many arboreta located on greenway or walking trails experience frequent vandalism problems. The City of Chattanooga resolved their problem by hanging their labels higher in the tree and placing indicators on the asphalt walking trails to bring to the visitor's attention of a labeled tree.

