
Southeast Trees:

A Multi-Site Tree Planting and Evaluation Project in Southeast Los Angeles County

Part 5. Additions to Seal Beach

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Parts 1 and 2 of this series provided an introduction, rationale, and background to this multi-site, tree planting and evaluation project in southeast Los Angeles County and adjacent Orange County, including an illustrated and annotated list of the more than 125 plantings made at El Dorado East Regional Park in Long Beach beginning in late 2015 and continuing through 2019 (Hodel 2020a) and 82 plantings made at city parks in Lakewood and Cerritos in Los Angeles County and Seal Beach in adjacent Orange County in 2017 and continuing through 2020 (Hodel 2020b). Parts 3 and 4 (Hodel and Holguin 2020, Hodel et al. 2020) provided illustrated and annotated lists of tree plantings made in October, 2020 at Satellite Park, Cerritos (seven trees) and in November and December, 2020 at Palms Park, Lakewood (22 trees). Here in Part 5 of this series we provide an illustrated and annotated list of six additional tree plantings, all *Ficus*, made in December, 2020 at The Greenbelt and at Marina Community Park in Seal Beach.

We added three trees to western end of The Greenbelt near the intersections of Electric Avenue, Marina Drive, and 5th Street (see Hodel 2020b for the location and a description of The Greenbelt).

We made three plantings in Marina Community Park, the first three of this project at this location. Irregularly shaped, the Park is on the north side of Marina Drive at the intersection with 1st Street. It is about 175 m east of the San Gabriel River and 700 m north of the Pacific Ocean. Like The Greenbelt, the site is in Sunset Zone 24, which was based on University of California geographical and climatological studies and is sufficiently close to the coast to access the moderating influence of the ocean. Winter night temperatures rarely approach freezing but lack of summer heat can be a problem for some trees. At the western or northwestern end adjacent to 1st Street, where we planted a *Ficus macrophylla* (Moreton Bay fig), the soil is extremely sandy and comprises an area of turfgrass surrounded by several trees, including *Pinus radiata* (Monterey pine) and *Ficus microcarpa* (Chinese banyan). About 50 m to the east, between paddleball courts and the Marina Park Community Center, is another area of turfgrass comprised nearly entirely of a wide but low mound about 1.5 m high. Here, where we planted *F. costaricana* and *F. thonningii*,



1. Mel Auguiano assists with planting *Ficus costaricana* at Marina Community Park, Seal Beach, CA, December 2020.

the soil is a loamy clay and was perhaps from the excavation of the Community Center building and/or the paddleball courts or was brought to the site to make the mounds.

We had the help of city-contracted landscape personnel for planting and sometimes maintaining the trees (**Fig. 1**). We planted trees out of 5-gallon-sized (ca. 19-liter) containers, always using unamended site soil that came out of the hole as the backfill. We carefully inspected root systems before planting and, if necessary, corrected circling or kinked roots.

After planting we applied mulch around the trees but we applied no fertilizer. Most trees were not staked for support after planting because they were structurally pruned judiciously and grown with ample space in co-author Hodel's nursery, but stakes were inserted in case they were needed in the future and to help keep errant turfgrass mowers and string trimmers away from the tree trunks. We structurally pruned trees as needed.

Perhaps the most serious problems will be weeds and errant turfgrass mowers and string trimmers, which can scar or bruise trunks and roots or completely or partially girdle trunks, despite being encouraged not to operate in proximity to the trunk. We will attain weed control through mulching and hand-weeding.

The trees are listed alphabetically and followed on the same line by the latitude and longitude coordinates (estimated from Google Earth) and an accession number that gives the year and month planted, and a two-letter code for location and a number that corresponds to that tree in a database spreadsheet. For example, *2020-12-MCP01* signifies that the tree was planted in 2020, December, at MCP (Marina Community Park) and is entry 1 in the spreadsheet database for that park. Similarly, *2020-12-GB35* signifies that the tree was planted in 2020, December, at GB (The Greenbelt) and is entry 35 in the spreadsheet database for that park. The common name(s) of the tree (in UPPERCASE), if any, mostly taken from the internet, follow(s) on the next line. The source of the tree or propagative material and planting month and year are on the lines below the common name.

Growth data by date, trunk diameter (at 30 cm above ground), and overall height is provided in table format. Because many of the trees were less than 4.5 feet (1.4 m) tall (the standard height for measuring trunk diameter) when planted, we measured trunk diameter at 30 cm above the soil so all trees could be uniformly assessed. As the trees grow we will transition to the standard trunk diameter at 4.5 feet (1.4 m) (DSH). A performance rating follows the growth table and considers several factors, including growth rate, pruning and training needs, pest and disease activity, and abiotic disorders like cold or heat damage, nutritional status, and perceived moisture effects. The rating is: 1 = dead or nearly so; 2 = poor; 3 = average; 4 = good; 5 = excellent.

Completing the treatment is a section titled Notes, a narrative providing a general summary of the tree's history, appearance, performance, nomenclature, and/or miscellaneous information.

Ficus costaricana 33.745451, -118.110629 2020-12-MCP2 **Fig. 2.**

HIGUERÓN, MATAPALO

Source: David Dewsnap, Endeavor, WI.

Planted: December 2020.

| Growth | Diam. @ 30 cm (cm) | DSH (cm) | Ht. (m) |
|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
| 12/2020 | 2.5 | 1.0 | 1.35 |

Rating: 5.

Notes: This donated plant occurs from Mexico to Colombia and typically starts life as a strangler on other trees. At this young age it has large, handsome leaves. A moderate and steady grower in the nursery, it needed no structural pruning and training to develop and maintain a strong central leader.

Ficus luschnathiana 33.745367, -118.106960 2020-12GB37 **Fig. 3.**

AGARRAPALO, HIGUERON BRAVO

Source: Cutting-grown from a remnant root sucker in the nursery of the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden, Arcadia, CA.

Planted: December 2020.

| Growth | Diam. @ 30 cm (cm) | DSH (cm) | Ht. (m) |
|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
| 12/2020 | 2.0 | 1.3 | 2.15 |

Rating: 5.

Notes: Also known as *Ficus monckii*, this South American native has been a fast and steady grower in the nursery with no need for structural pruning and training to develop and maintain a strong central leader. It has handsome dark green leaves and striking reddish new growth.

Ficus macrophylla f. columnaris 33.745763, -118.111009 2020-12-MCP1 **Fig. 4.**

MORETON BAY FIG

Source: Tim Hoehn-Boydston, San Diego Zoo, San Diego, CA.

Planted: December 2020.

| Growth | Diam. @ 30 cm (cm) | DSH (cm) | Ht. (m) |
|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
| 12/2020 | 3.8 | 1.3 | 1.80 |

Rating: 5.

Notes: This donated plant was grown from seed collected on Lord Howe Island, Australia. This form is noted for the tremendous proliferation of pillar or support roots that support the wide-ranging branches. It remains to be seen if these support roots will form in our climate. The species is known for its large, handsome leaves and typically spectacularly buttressed trunk, features that do occur in our climate. A fast and steady grower in the nursery, it needed no structural pruning and training to develop and maintain a strong central leader.



2. Marianne Hodel and *Ficus costaricana*.



3. *Ficus luschnathiana*.



4. *Ficus macrophylla* f. *columnaris*, 2020-12-MCP1.



5. *Ficus macrophylla* f. *columnaris*, 2020-12-GB36.

Ficus macrophylla* f. *columnaris 33.745277, -118.106560 2020-12-GB36 **Fig. 5.**

MORETON BAY FIG

Source: Tim Hoehn-Boydston, San Diego Zoo, San Diego, CA.

Planted: December 2020.

| Growth | Diam. @ 30 cm (cm) | DSH (cm) | Ht. (m) |
|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
| 12/2020 | 2.5 | 1.0 | 1.65 |

Rating: 5.

Notes: This donated plant was grown from seed collected on Lord Howe Island, Australia. This form is noted for the tremendous proliferation of pillar or support roots that support the wide-ranging branches. It remains to be seen if these support roots will form in our climate. The species is known for its large, handsome leaves and typically spectacularly buttressed trunk, features that do occur in our climate. A fast and steady grower in the nursery, it needed no structural pruning and training to develop and maintain a strong central leader.

***Ficus rubiginosa* ‘El Toro’** 33.744462, -118.105525 2020-12-GB35 **Fig. 6.**

RUSTY-LEAF FIG

Source: A seed-grown plant from a tree at Fashion Island, Newport Beach, CA.

Planted: December 2020.

| Growth | Diam. @ 30 cm (cm) | DSH (cm) | Ht. (m) |
|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
| 12/2020 | 2.5 | --- | 1.35 |

Rating: 5.

Notes: This Australian species is noted for its thick, leathery leaves typically with conspicuous rusty brown tomentum on the abaxial surface (underside). This plant was grown from seeds gathered from the informally named cultivar ‘El Toro’, which has a denser canopy and somewhat smaller, exceedingly dark green leaves with an exceptionally dense covering of dark rusty brown nearly black tomentum on the abaxial surface. The dense canopy of exceedingly dark green leaves makes ‘El Toro’ a highly sought-after selection. A moderate and steady grower in the nursery, it needed little structural pruning and training to develop and maintain a strong central leader.

Ficus thonningii 33.745430, -118.110471 2020-12-MCP3 **Fig. 7.**

COMMON WILD FIG

Source: Tim Hoehn-Boydston, San Diego Zoo, San Diego, CA.

Planted: December 2020.

| Growth | Diam. @ 30 cm (cm) | DSH (cm) | Ht. (m) |
|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
| 12/2020 | 2.2 | 1.3 | 2.15 |

Rating: 5.

Notes: This donated plant came with the name “Perbula” on its label. It is an African species that typically begins life as a strangler on other trees. A fast and steady grower in the nursery, it needed no structural pruning and training to develop and maintain a strong central leader. Many other species have been included as synonyms with this species and the taxonomy and nomenclature of this complex need to be sorted out.



6. *Ficus rubiginosa* 'El Toro'.



7. *Ficus thonningii*.

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