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# Southeast Trees:

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

### Part 3. Satellite Park, Cerritos

DONALD R. HODEL AND BINO HOLGUIN

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). Here in Part 3 of this series we provide an illustrated and annotated list of tree plantings made in October, 2020 at a second park in Cerritos, Satellite Park.

Square-shaped Satellite Park is surrounded by a residential area north of state Route 91 Freeway and west of Bloomfield Avenue at the end of Ash Creek Road. The park is about 15 km from the Pacific Ocean at Long Beach, 3.7 km east of the San Gabriel River, and 4.7 km northeast of Liberty Park, the first site in Cerritos where we planted trees. The site is mostly flat but has a few small, gently mounding, artificial hills a few meters tall. The site is in Sunset Zone 22, which was based on University of California geographical and climatological studies, and is too far from the coast (Sunset Zone 24) to access the moderating influence of the ocean and yet is not far enough inland where hilly terrain (Sunset Zone 23) would provide better air drainage on cold winter nights. Indeed, for a few nights nearly every winter freezing or near freezing temperatures occur at the site. Because of its proximity to the San Gabriel River, soil at Satellite Park is a deep, good quality, sandy alluvium, making planting a pleasure. So far, water is not an issue. It is reclaimed and with no restrictions on its use.

An expanse of turfgrass comprises most of Satellite Park and measures about 75 m east to west and 80 m north to south. Most of the turfgrass expanse is a baseball diamond and field, which restricts trees to the perimeter. Established perimeter trees include *Magnolia grandiflora* (magnolia), *Pinus canariensis* (Canary Island pine), *Platanus × hispanica* (London plane tree), and *Pyrus calleryana* ‘Bradford’ (Bradford pear).



1. The crew at Satellite Park in Cerritos, CA is ready to plant *Ficus insipida*. L-R: Ralph Guillen, Alfredo Murillo, co-author Bino Holguin, Jaime Olea, Vincent Chavez, and Juan Villalpando.

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We made the only planting of trees at Satellite Park in late October, 2020, although we hope to make more at other parks in Cerritos because of the cooperative nature of city personnel and the adequate water at Cerritos parks. We planted seven trees, six species of *Ficus* and one of *Koelreuteria*, filling in some gaps between some of the existing perimeter trees.

We had the help of city crews 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.

Occasionally 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, *2020-10-SP01* signifies that the tree was planted in 2020, October, at SP (Satellite Park) and is entry 1 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) (DBH). 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 albipila** 33.882865, -118.068334 2020-10-SP4 **Fig. 2.**

ABBEY TREE, FIGWOOD, POISON TREE

Source: Plant, David Dewsnap, Endeavor, WI.

Planted: October 2020.

| Growth  | Diam. @ 30 cm (cm) | DSH (cm) | Ht. (m) |
|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
| 10/2020 | 1.8                | ---      | 1.57    |

Rating: 5.

Notes: This donated plant is a species that occurs from Southeast Asia to northern Australian, where it is noted for its tall, straight, buttressed trunk, a feature that likely will not develop here, and hairy leaves. It has been a strong grower in the nursery.



2. *Ficus albipila* and Marianne Hodel.



3. *Ficus destruens* and Marianne Hodel.



4. *Ficus insipida* and Marianne Hodel.



5. *Ficus pleurocarpa* and Marianne Hodel.

**Ficus destruens** 33.882906, -118.067856 2020-10-SP2 **Fig. 3.**

RUSTY FIG

Source: Plant, David Dewsnap, Endeavor, WI.

Planted: October 2020.

| Growth  | Diam. @ 30 cm (cm) | DSH (cm) | Ht. (m) |
|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
| 10/2020 | 1.6                | ---      | 1.40    |

Rating: 5.

Notes: This Australian native and handsome, donated plant has dark green leaves with a rusty tomentum on the abaxial (lower) surface. It has been a moderate grower in the nursery. Its litter mate is at Arbor Road Park in Lakewood.

**Ficus insipida** 33.882677, -118.0683470 2020-10-SP5 **Fig. 4.**

AMATE, CHALATE, FIG, HIGUERA

Source: Plant, Sherman Nursery, San Marcos, CA.

Planted: October 2020.

| Growth  | Diam. @ 30 cm (cm) | DSH (cm) | Ht. (m) |
|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
| 10/2020 | 1.8                | ---      | 1.25    |

Rating: 5.

Notes: This purchased plant is a handsome species that occurs from Mexico to South America, where it is noted for its tall, straight, buttressed trunk, a feature that likely will not develop here, and glossy, dark green leaves with numerous, prominent nerves. It has been a strong grower in the nursery.

**Ficus pleurocarpa** 33.882917, -118.067773 2020-10-SP1 **Fig. 5.**

BANANA FIG

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

Planted: October 2020.

| Growth  | Diam. @ 30 cm (cm) | DSH (cm) | Ht. (m) |
|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
| 10/2020 | 2.2                | ---      | 1.37    |

Rating: 5.

Notes: This Australian native and handsome, donated plant has large leaves like those of *Ficus macrophylla* and prominent golden-brown stipules. It has been a strong grower in the nursery. Others of this species are at Arbor road Park in Lakewood and at Zoeter Park in Seal Beach.

**Ficus preussii** 33.882892, -118.068289 2020-10-SP3 **Fig. 6.**

PREUSS'S FIG

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

Planted: October 2020.

| Growth  | Diam. @ 30 cm (cm) | DSH (cm) | Ht. (m) |
|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
| 10/2020 | 1.7                | ---      | 1.65    |

Rating: 5.



6. *Ficus preussii* and Marianne Hodel.



7. *Ficus trigonata* and Marianne Hodel.

Notes: This African native and handsome, donated plant has attractive, thick, oblong, gray-green leaves. It has been a moderate grower in the nursery.

***Ficus trigonata*** 33.882633, -118.068346 2020-10-SP6 **Fig. 7.**

HIGUERÓN, JAGUEY BLANCO

Source: Air layer, Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden, Arcadia, CA.

Planted: October 2020.

| Growth  | Diam. @ 30 cm (cm) | DSH (cm) | Ht. (m) |
|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
| 10/2020 | 2.0                | ---      | 1.07    |

Rating: 3.

Notes: This handsome species occurs from Mexico to northern South America, where it is noted for its buttressed trunk, a feature that likely will not develop here, and glossy, dark green leaves with numerous, prominent nerves. It has been a slow grower in the nursery.

***Koelreuteria elegans subsp. elegans*** 33.882566, -118.067576 2020-10-SP7 **Fig. 8.**

LOBOLOBO, MANAWI, WIRI, WIWI

Source: Grown from seeds wild collected in 2017 along the road from Tavua up to Nadarivatu, just below and prior to arriving at the latter town, on Viti Levu, Fiji.

Planted: October 2020.



8. *Koelreuteria elegans* subsp. *elegans* and Marianne Hodel.

| Growth  | Diam. @ 30 cm (cm) | DSH (cm) | Ht. (m) |
|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
| 10/2020 | 1.0                | ---      | 1.25    |

Rating: 4.

Notes: This subspecies, which is endemic to Fiji and probably not previously grown in California, differs from *Koelreuteria elegans* subsp. *formosana*, which is common in California, in its shorter petiolules, obtuse to rounded and wider petals, and longer claw and filaments. It has been a moderate grower in the nursery.

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