

The Sea Pines Legacy Oaks Program celebrates, interprets and enhances our special Live Oak trees so those who visit and live here will have a better appreciation of the importance of them and the need for their protection. Fifteen trees have been selected from the thousands in Sea Pines. These extraordinary trees represent the best specimens and illustrate the variety of trunk and branch structure which are characteristic of the species. They range in age from 150 to 350 years old.

Where to Find Them

They are all on easily accessible public property. Visitors to the trees should use the leisure trails to walk or bicycle, as car parking is not provided. The trees are identified with a bench containing the name of the tree and its approximate date of germination.

Live Oaks are large, majestic trees that are strongly reminiscent of the Old South. Their broad spreading habit and deep shade is enhanced with the grace of Spanish Moss hanging from their limbs. While they thrive in the sandy soil of the barrier islands of the Carolinas, Georgia and Florida, their range extends along the Gulf Coast to Texas.

Why “Live” Oaks?

They are called “Live” because they are the only oak to keep its leaves all year long. The ever-green leaves have a waxy cellulose covering which protects them against the colder temperatures of winter. They are only 40 to 60 feet tall and their massive 3-4' thick trunks support sprawling horizontal limbs that extend out to three times the tree's height. The lower branches often droop to the ground providing climbing opportunities for children. Their inconspicuous brown flowers appear in March when the new leaves push the old ones off the tree. These are followed by thousands of 1" acorns which fall like rain through the leaves in December. The deer rely on them for 50% of their winter diet.



Resurrection Fern

Resurrection fern carpets their massive horizontal limbs. It gets its name because during periods of drought the leaves curl, turn brown and look dead. Within 24 hours after a rain, it becomes a vibrant green appearing to 'resurrect' itself.

Spanish Moss

Spanish Moss grows in a silvery-gray threadlike mass which can extend up to 25 feet long. This is not a true moss, as it is an herb without roots that does not impact the tree. When it rains, the moss becomes 75% water and changes from silver to green.

Images courtesy of Bill Littell



Sea Pines
Legacy Oaks

Explore *Over 300 Years of*
Natural Beauty





1. Liberty Oak - circa 1700

32.1383, -80.8114, Charles Fraser, the father of Sea Pines, is buried under this tree. This tree shades the performance stage where Gregg Russell has entertained children and adults for over three decades.

2. Harbour Town Oak - circa 1715

32.1387, -80.8097, This tree has the largest spread of 129', some of its limbs nearing the ground and provides a spectacular welcome to Harbour Town.

3. Deer Island Oak - circa 1885

32.1394, -80.8096, This unique tree has four trunks that have grown together to form a tree that looks older than it is because of the mass of its combined trunk.

4. Lawton Oak - circa 1775

32.1440, -80.7894, This tree begins the Sea Pines signature grove of Live Oaks which extends from here one mile on both sides of Plantation Drive to Lighthouse Road.



#15 - South Beach Oak

5. Six Oaks Park - circa 1665

32.1464, -80.7895, Our oldest trees were the entrance to the Lawton Plantation Mansion, which existed here between 1820 and 1870. The trees are much older than the plantation and who planted them and why, remains a mystery.

6. Carolina Oak - circa 1819

32.1472, -80.7806, This handsome four stemmed, vase shaped, 200 year old specimen welcomes all visitors to Sea Pines as it is the closest Legacy Oak to the Greenwood Gate. Of course, it also bids farewell to those headed home.

7. Fish Island Trail Oak - circa 1695

32.1401, -80.7807, Our largest tree with massive horizontal limbs welcomes visitors to the 600 acre Forest Preserve.

8. Live Oak - circa 1860

32.1322, -80.7806, This double trunked tree is developing low horizontal limbs which will ultimately touch the ground.

9. Plantation Oak - circa 1863

32.1275, -80.7897, This new clubhouse was raised 15' above grade when built in 2014 and resulted in this extraordinary walled tree protection of the root system.

10. Fraser Oak - circa 1760

32.1314, -80.7962, This circle, dedicated to the founder of Sea Pines, Charles Fraser, was built to save this magnificent specimen.

11. Stoney- Baynard Oak - circa 1853

32.1289, -80.8133, This tree germinated, or was perhaps planted, during the time the Baynard Family owned the plantation. Its high branching and symmetrical shape make this tree special amongst the Legacy Oaks.

12. Greenwood Oak - circa 1810

32.1215, -80.8031, One of our tallest specimens at 75'.

13. Wagon Oak - circa 1775

32.1180, -80.8053, These three massive branches are an unusual example of a single trunk branching out so close to the ground into a magnificent vase shape. This tree contains the best display of Spanish Moss.

14. Heritage Woods Oak - circa 1815

32.1169, -80.8071, This tree punctuates one of the nicest scenes in Sea Pines overlooking Heritage Woods Pond.

15. South Beach Oak - circa 1855

32.1161, -80.8265, This park setting also contains one of the oldest Eastern Red Cedars on Hilton Head Island.

