



# Important Monumental **TREES** of ANTALYA



ANTALYA METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

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**Department of Urban History and Publicity**

Antalya / 2023



# Important Monumental Trees of Antalya

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**W**hat makes Antalya the most beautiful city in the world is not only its historical and cultural values. Our city is unimaginable without the rich vegetation and the natural environment surrounding it. Undoubtedly, trees are indispensable building blocks of the natural environment we live in. In addition to their vital duties necessary for all living creatures, trees can also be the shadows of our culture from thousands of years ago, or sometimes, the embrace a child needs with the swing hanging from its branches. Trees accompany and transform our lives, from our nearest place to our distant surroundings.

Our aim is to both protect our natural heritage and lead the way for more comprehensive protection and registration works, by recording the monumental trees in various regions of Antalya. We have prepared this booklet to add a new one to our works we have done with the purpose of protecting all the values of Antalya. Thus, we, as Antalya Metropolitan Municipality, are proud and happy to present the major monumental trees of our city.



Trees are one of the most impressive creatures in nature. Nature is peace, and trees are breaths. The existence of trees is priceless for humanity. We cannot survive without trees, which has many benefits to nature, including being the oxygen source with its vital role in the carbon dioxide cycle.

On the other hand, trees have been perceived as the symbol of the continuity of life and cosmic power, since the Ancient Greek era to the modern age, and in this context, the respect for trees, continued uninterruptedly (Pardo, 2005).

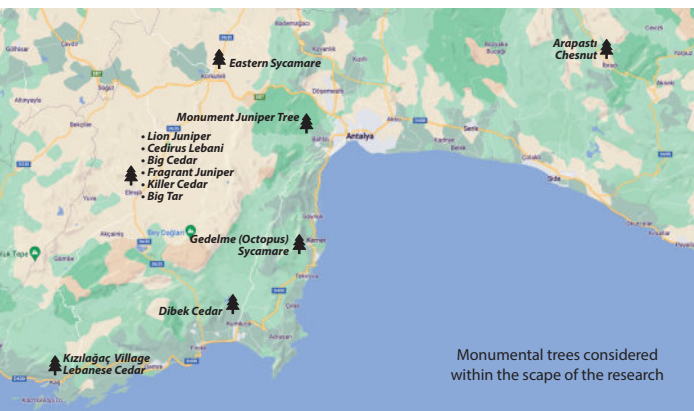
Perceiving trees as the beauty, courage, resilience, and the fundamental force of life has been a shared universal value (Musselman, 2003; Albian & Berwick, 2004). Various societies have created magical totems from trees. Some special trees have even been sanctified with the adjectives of “saintness” and “prophecy” (Séne, 2003). In some civilizations, the letters used in writing were chosen from trees. For instance, the 25 characters of the Baltic alphabet (Ogham), consists of 20 trees and some sacred plants. In Irish culture, the wood of the beech tree was used in the production of old writing sets, and the thin bark of the tree was used as the pages of the first books. As a matter of fact, in English and some other Indo-European languages, the word “book” and the word “beech” are etymologically linked (Crews, 2003).

Supported by taboos, rituals, and beliefs about trees and forests, and transferred from generation to generation, the mystic folklore forms the basis of the “tree love” in religions and traditions (Swamyvd., 2003; Garciavd., 2006).

While trees in general have always been this important for generations, monumental trees in specific, are privileged beings of our world, with their long lives, and gigantic structures that testify to history. The age of these enormous trees can sometimes even be expressed in 4 digit numbers. With the cultural heritage they carry from the past to the present, and the changing physical characteristics as a result of their continuous development, monumental trees affect the society, and have a special place in the identity of the community. While this effect increases

people’s attachment to their ancestry, nation and region, it also contributes significantly to the increase in nature love and environmental awareness in the society (Asan, 2010).

“Trees, which have dimensions above the usual measurements of their kind in terms of age, diameter, and height, have a special place



in the local folklore, culture, and history, and have a natural life long enough to communicate between the past and the present, the present and the future” are scientifically defined as a monumental tree (Asan, 1991; Asan, 1993).

Especially the physical characteristics such as the diameter and height of the tree, are among the features that make a tree a monument. However, physical properties alone are not enough to define a tree as monumental. In addition to their physical characteristics, monumental trees must also have a long enough natural lifespan to establish a bond between generations. The fact that they have a real or imaginary, positive or negative, mystical or folkloric story in the culture of the region they are located in, and that they have been identified with some events in history, or that they have witnessed history have also given these trees a monumental quality. This is why monumental trees are trees that should be taken under absolute protection by taking all kinds of precautions, should not be cut down for any reason, should not be moved to another place, and should be left as a natural heritage to future generations (Bayar et al., 2012).

Monument trees are registered according to their dimensional and cultural characteristics, and are divided into 4 groups as dimensional, historical, folkloric, and mystical:

**1- Dimensional Monumental Trees:** In terms of dimensional features such as age, height, trunk and crown diameter, they are trees that have reached sizes far above their usual sizes in the same species or in similar habitats.

**2- Historical Monumental Trees:** They are trees that have witnessed the past of a historical event or an important person.

**3- Folkloric Monumental Trees:** They are trees that have a traditional value in folk culture, and have a special place among the community, as they have witnessed a saddening or a joyful event in the region.

**4- Mystical Monumental Trees:** They are trees that have been glorified by the local people according to a religious belief. Trees were considered sacred in the Shaman, Turkish, and Central Asian mythology. Throughout history, people have deified and worshiped the great trees.

Antalya, with all its districts stretching from Alanya to Kaş, is a significant area in terms of having the tallest, and highest number of monumental trees in Turkey.

Besides the 160 monumental trees registered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks, and the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, General Directorate of Conservation of Natural Assets, there are many more trees waiting to be registered as monumental trees in Antalya. In this booklet, the most important 17 monumental trees with symbolic qualities, in Elmalı, Kemer, Kaş, Kumluca, Korkuteli, and İbradı were examined.

## MONUMENTAL TREES COVERED IN THE RESEARCH

Monumental Tree	Location	Age (years)	Height (m)	Stem Diameter (m)	Accessibility	Relationship with the environment	Feature
Lion Juniper	Elmalı/Çiğlikara NCA*	1700	23,2	3,0	With a guide	Forest	
Taurus Cedar (Lebanese Cedar)	Elmalı/Çiğlikara NCA	1500	25,0	2,6	With a guide	Forest	
Big Cedar	Elmalı CRF**	909	32,5	2,3	Suitable for individual access	Forest	
Shah Juniper (Fragrant Juniper)	Elmalı CRF	1015	22,8	2,4	Suitable for individual access	Forest	
Ram Cedar	Elmalı /Çiğlikara NCA	680	38,0	2,0	With a guide	Forest	
Killer Cedar (Karamık Village Cedar)	Elmalı/ Çiğlikara NCA	672	26,5	1,8	With a guide	Forest	
Big Tar	Elmalı/Çiğlikara NCA	2000	32,3	2,5	With a guide	Forest	
Lebanese Cedar	Kızılağaç - Gedik Hole	1500	26,0	2,5	Suitable for individual access	Forest	
Warehouse Tar (Dibek Cedar)	Dibek NCA	2346	25,0	2,6	With a guide	Forest	World's oldest Cedar tree
Gedelme Sycamore (Octopus Sycamore)	Gedelme Plateau	2700	28,0	4,5	Suitable for individual access	Rural	
Arapaşı Chestnut	İbradı Town Center	1100	19,0	13m (stem perimeter)	Suitable for individual access	Rural	
Eastern Sycamore 1	Korkuteli Alladdin Keykubat Cad.	1001	20,0	0,7	Suitable for individual access	Median	
Eastern Sycamore 2	Korkuteli Town Center	950	19,0	0,8	Suitable for individual access	Mosque garden	
Eastern Sycamore 3	Korkuteli Town Center	700	20,0	1,7	Suitable for individual access	Yol kenarı	
Eastern Sycamore	Kemer/Çamyuva	1000	21,0	4,5	With a guide	Rural	
Eastern Sycamore	Muratpaşa/ Kırçami	700	30,0	4,7	Suitable for individual access	In the city	
Juniper Tree***	Konyaaltı/ Gökçam	500	13,0	1,1	Suitable for individual access	By the roadside	Grew at sea level

\*NCA: Nature Conservation Area. \*\*CRF: Cedar Research Forest. \*\*\* The Monumental Juniper Tree that was registered as a Monument Tree in 2021 by the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, upon the request of the Antalya Metropolitan Municipality, within the scope of "Yeşilçam Hiking and Cycling Road" project.

## ELMALI REGION

Elmalı is a prominent location in terms of monumental trees. The Çıǧlıkara Forest, is located on the Elmalı-Finike border, is 55km from Elmalı, and 165 km from Antalya. It has an area of 15,889 hectares with 1000-2000 years old trees, and has 30% of the cedar forests in our country. Çıǧlıkara and Çam Kuyuları on Beydağları, is one of the most beautiful spreading area of Taurus Cedar species, which is also called Tar among the local people. Çıǧlıkara is one of the rarest cedar forests, not only in Turkey but also in the whole world. There are junipers among the cedars that make up the forest. Many trees in the Çıǧlıkara Forest were registered as monumental trees in 1995.

### **Lion Juniper** (*Juniperus foetidissima*)

The Lion Juniper Tree, located in the Çıǧlıkara Nature Conservation Area in the Tekke Strait of the Tekke village of Elmalı, was declared a natural monument on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1995. (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020a; Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020b; Cengiz et al., 2007).

The Lion Juniper has a height of 23.2 m, a trunk diameter of 3m, and a trunk circumference of 9.52m. The age of the monumental tree is approximately 1700. It is a tree that witnessed the domination of the Roman Empire until 395 AD, the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire between 395-1324, and the Anatolian Seljuk State between 1324-1423. The tree has been mentioned in the sayings of folk poet Abdal Musa, and it has an important place in the Alevism culture. The Lion Juniper is classified as a mystical monumental tree (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020a).



Lion Juniper (Photograph: Ümit Durak)

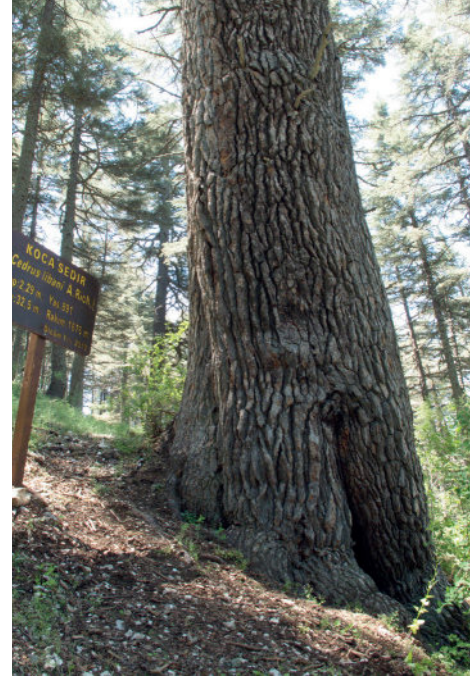
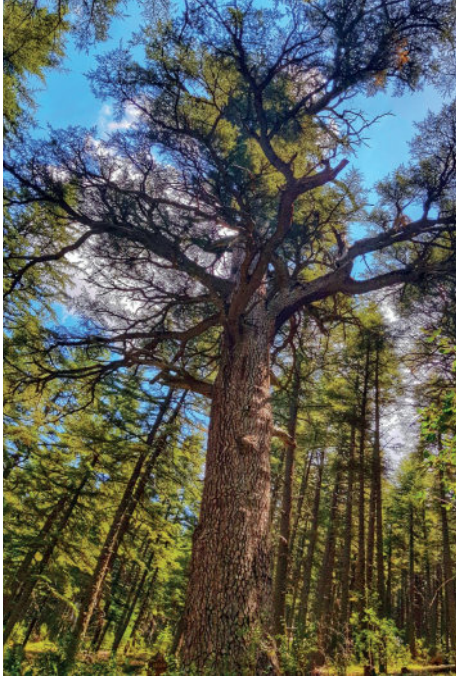


## **Taurus Cedar** (*Cedrus libani*)

This 1500-year-old tree, also known as the Taurus Cedar, was declared a monumental tree in 1995, in Elmalı, in the Çıglıkara Nature Conservation Area. It is a precious tree with the softness of its timber, its unique smell, and durability. The 25 meters tall monumental tree is a dimensional monumental tree with a diameter of 262 centimeters and a circumference of 8 meters and 23 centimeters (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2020).

## **Big Cedar** (*Cedrus libani*)

Located in Elmalı Cedar Research Forest in Elmalı Göltarla village, in Ekizler, Alıçalanı, the Big Cedar was determined to be 898 years old in 2010. The Big Cedar is 32.5m in length, 2.29m in diameter, and 7.19m in circumference, and it was declared a natural monument on September 16th, 2002. Cedar is a tree species that has seen great civilizations for thousands of years. It has been used in the construction of palaces, temples, and luxury buildings, also has been used both for its tar and wood, in ancient Egyptian mummification. Big Sedir is a historical monumental tree that has witnessed the Anatolian Seljuk State and the entire Ottoman Empire Period, and was left unappreciated in the contracting sector, between 1927 and 1936 (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020a).



Big Cedar. (Photograph: Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, National Parks Antalya Branch Office Archive, Ümit Durak)



Shah Juniper  
/Fragrant  
Juniper.  
(Photograph:  
Ümit Durak)



### **Shah Juniper** (*Juniperus foetidissima*)

Located in Elmalı Cedar Research Forest in Elmalı Göltarla Village, Işıkbeli area, Shah Juniper was declared as a natural monument on February 21<sup>st</sup>, 1995 (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020a; Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020b; Cengiz et al., 2007).

Shah Juniper is 22.8m tall, has a trunk diameter of 2.42m, and a trunk circumference of 7.46m. It is a tree that has witnessed the last period of the Anatolian Seljuk State and the entire Ottoman Empire Period. It is popularly known as “Fragrant Juniper” since it has taught the Elmalı Mountains to smell good. The estimated age of the Shah Juniper was set at 989, at the time. It is classified as a folkloric monumental tree (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020a).

## Ram Cedar (*Cedrus libani*)

Ram Cedar, which is located in the Elmalı Kızılağaç village, Rabbit area, in the Çıglıkara Nature Conservation Area and was used for scientific research. It was declared a natural monument on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1995 (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020a; Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020b; Cengiz et al., 2007).

Its estimated age is 680, trunk diameter is 2, and height is 38 meters. It is a tree that witnessed the Teke Principality for a while after the Anatolian Seljuk State ended, and the Ottoman Empire after 1423. It is considered sacred according to Islam and many religious beliefs. The Ram Cedar is classified as a mystical monumental tree (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020a).



## Karamık Village Cedar/ Killer Cedar (*Cedrus libani*)

The Killer Cedar is located in the Çıglıkara Nature Conservation Area in Sulu Çukur Area, Oluk Bridge, in Elmalı Karamık village. It was declared as a natural monument on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1995 (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020a; Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020b; Cengiz et al., 2007).

Its estimated age is 672, height is 26.5 m, trunk diameter is 1.75, and trunk circumference is 5.5m. The tree has witnessed the Teke principality between 1352-1423, and the Ottoman Empire between 1423-1920. The local name of the tree is “Killer Cedar” because two people who went out to get the honey on the tree’s trunk died by falling from the tree. The Killer Cedar is a folkloric monumental tree and the region where the tree is located is a nature protection area used for scientific research (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020a).





## **Big Tar** (*Cedrus libani*)

The Big Tar is located in the ılıkara Nature Conservation Area that is used for scientific research, in Elmalı Dođantaş village, Bölük Katran area. The tree was declared as a natural monument on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1995 (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020a; Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020b; Cengiz et al., 2007).

It has a height of 32.3m, trunk diameter of 2.53, and trunk circumference of 7.97m. It witnessed the domination of the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire between 1302 and 1324, the Teke Principality between 1324 and 1423, and the Ottoman Empire in 1423-1920. It is a tree that is considered sacred in Islam and many religious beliefs. The tree is 200 years old, and is classified as a mystical monumental tree (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020a).



Big Tar / Lebanese Cedar. (Photograph: Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, National Parks Antalya Branch Office Archive, Ümit Durak)



## **KAŞ REGION**

Kaş is a touristic town on the Mediterranean coast, west of Antalya. Its coast length is 90km. At the foot of the Taurus Mountains, it hosts thousands of tourists every year with its history and culture.

### **Lebanese Cedar of Kızılağaç Village** (*Cedrus libani*)

The Lebanese Cedar is located in the Kızılağaç Village of Kaş, in Gedik Hole. It was registered on February 21<sup>st</sup>, 1995, and is estimated to be 1500 years old (Cengiz et al., 2007). It is 26m in height, 2.45m in trunk width, and 7.69m in crown width (Acar, 2015). The monumental tree is located in a dense forest, and has a unique effect with the forest surrounding it. According to some writers, such a forest has a symbolic structure loaded with metaphors that allow people to know and analyze themselves through it.

In ancient times, it was said that the wealth and power of states came from forests covered with cedar trees. The crown of the Lebanon Cedar, which has a pyramidal crown structure in its youth, becomes like an umbrella as it ages. As the tree ages, it turns into a cracked, scaly structure, and its color turns into a blackish ash color. It is called “tar tree” among the people because of its black pitch-like resin. Its appearance is majestic. The Lebanese Cedar of Kızılağaç Village, is a historical monumental tree.

## **KUMLUCA REGION**

There are important ancient cities such as Olympos, Corydella, Rhodiapolis, Idebessiois, and Gagae, in the Kumluca district. Olympos is especially visited by many local and foreign tourists. The coastline of the district is 30km. Adrasan Bay and Olympos Bay on this coastline in Çavuşkøy town, serve local and foreign tourists with its hotels, motels, pensions, and restaurants.

### **Warehouse Tar** (*Cedrus libani*)

The cedar tree called “Warehouse Tar” or “Dibek Cedar”, is located in Kumluca Dibek Nature Conservation Area. It is the oldest cedar tree in Turkey and in the world! It is 2346 years old, 25m tall, and 2.62m in trunk diameter (Kantarıcı, 1984). It is a historical monumental tree and was declared a natural monument on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2002 (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020a).

The place where Warehouse Tar is located, is the beginning of a dry stream valley. Since the land has a steep slope, there is a height difference of 110cm at the base of the tree, between the lower and upper parts. Flat areas can be created by terracing around the tree. Arrangements can be made to facilitate physical communication with the tree and the natural border elements that define the space.

Warehouse Tar / Dibek Cedar.  
(Photograph: Ümit Durak)



## **KEMER REGION**

Kemer is one of the touristic districts on the Mediterranean coast, west of Antalya. It is a popular destination for local and foreign tourists for sea, sand, and sun holidays. In this sense, the monumental tree, located in the countryside of Kemer is very important in terms of attracting tourists to nature, and culture, together with the historical texture near it.

### **Gedelme Octopus Plane Tree** (*Platanus orientalis*)

The tree is located in the Kuzdere village, 13km from the town center, and it was registered on Gedelme Plateau at an altitude of 600, on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2003 (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020a; Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2020b; Cengiz et al., 2007).

The giant plane tree, which is estimated to be 2700 years old, fascinates whoever sees the tree, with its 28m-height, 4.54m-trunk diameter, and 14.26m- crown. It is a tree that has witnessed an older history than the nearby Byzantine Castle.

The symbolic value of the plane tree in literature is emphasized on the tree infor-



Gedelme Plane Tree. (Photograph: Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, National Parks Antalya Branch Office Archive)

mation board, since the plane tree is one of the most frequently mentioned trees in Divan and folk literature, mysticism and contemporary poetry. The plane tree has been a frequent subject to literature, and has led to various meanings with its features: being the tree that sheds its leaves last, has leaves resembling an open hand, has a bark that peels off much and quickly, has a large trunk, and is longer-lived than other trees.

Due to the wet structure of its body, the fact that it attracts lightning causes a belief that it burns on its own.

### **Eastern Plane Tree** (*Platanus orientalis*)

Located in Kemer Çamyuva, this monumental tree is 1000 years old, 21m tall, 4.5m in trunk diameter, and 40m in crown diameter.

## **İBRADI REGION**

İbradı, which is a thousand m above sea level, is a town 170 km away from Antalya. The historical buttoned houses of the district, which were on the verge of collapsing, have been restored, and brought to tourism. Every year, thousands of tourists visit İbradı to see its natural and cultural beauties.

### **Arapastı Chestnut**

In İbradı, the tree with a height of 19m, and a circumference of 13m is estimated to be 1000-1100 years old (Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, 2020).





The Arapasti Chestnut in Ibradi. (The Municipality of Ibradi Archive)

This famous chestnut tree is named after a true story. İbradı has gone through many fires throughout its history. One of the most important of these fires is the fire of 1861, which also had a great impact in the Ottoman Empire. This fire started when the Arabian slave Zeynep set the mansion of her master Mustafa Efendi on fire, and the fire spread to a large part of İbradı, causing it to burn. Zeynep, who was found guilty, was sentenced to death and hung on this tree. After that day, this chestnut tree was called “Arapastı” (eng: hung an Arabian). It is a folkloric monumental tree.

## **KORKUTELİ REGION**

Korkuteli, where the Ottoman prince Sultan Korkut was educated and also gave education himself, is a district of 1020m above sea level, with a mostly continental climate. Generally, the occupation of the people is agriculture, fruit growing, farming, beekeeping, and forestry. The cultivation of mushrooms, which has become widespread in the region in recent years, also contributes greatly to the economy of the district.

### **Eastern Plane Tree** (*Platanus orientalis*)

Korkuteli has 3 monumental trees, classified as dimensional monumental trees, of *Platanus orientalis* species. The first one is 1001 years old, has a trunk diameter of 70cm, a crown diameter of 8m, and is 20 meters tall. The second one is 950 years old with a trunk diameter of 80cm, a crown of 7m, and a height of 19m. The third one is 700 years old with a trunk diameter of 170cm, a crown diameter of 7m, and a height of about 20m (Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, 2020). The trees are in the town center.

It is noteworthy that the 700-year-old Eastern Plane Tree is located in the central median on Alaeddin Keykubat Street. The mythological story of the plane tree is as follows: “According to the legend in Greek and Roman mythology, Baucis and Philemon are a poor and old couple, living in a city around Phrygia. One day, God Zeus and his son Hermes descend from Mount Olympus, they get disguised as human beings, and mingle with the people. The two gods who came to today’s Bergama according to some sources, or Cappadocia according to others, do not like what they see here. Moreover, they are not accepted as guests by any host they want to stay in. Angry, the gods try their last luck by knocking on Baucis and Philemon’s door.

The old couple living in a simple cottage, accept the two men, and they behave extremely generously despite all their poverty. Offering wine and food to their guests, Baucis realizes for a moment that nothing misses from the table as the two men eat and drink, thanks to an invisible blessing. At that moment, the old couple realizes that the two men are gods, and asks forgiveness from them if they have made any mistakes. Zeus tells them that this is not necessary, and they



should leave their homes with them. Because he will destroy the whole town and everyone who didn't show hospitality. Thereupon, the old couple, who went to the top of the mountain with the gods, saw that the town was gone under water; but their hut has now turned into an ostentatious temple. Zeus asks the old couple if they desire anything. The husband and wife do not expect much from life, and they say that they want to be the keeper of the temple, and most importantly, to never separate from each other and to die together when the time comes. Zeus will grant this request. When the time of death comes, these old husband and wife, who loved each other very much, turn into two different trees that are intertwined. They say; they have now become sycamore and linden trees united in the same trunk." (Zimba, 2021).

These stories will inspire a tree and nature love, in those who love stories and an interest in mythology and literature, in those who love trees and nature.



Konyaalti/Gökçam  
Monumental Juniper Tree  
(Photograph: Ebru Cücü Açıklalın)



Eastern Plane  
Tree in Kircami  
(Photo: Ministry  
of Environment  
and Urbanization  
General Directorate  
of Conservation  
of Natural Assets  
Conservation  
Inventory of Natural  
Assets 2018)



## ANTALYA CENTER

### **Monumental Juniper Tree** (*Juniperus excelsa*)

The Tall Juniper Tree (Gökçam) is located in Konyaaltı, Kır neighborhood, block 21603, parcel 18. It was noticed during the “Yeşilçam Hiking and Cycling Path” project, which was written and carried out by the Department of Urban History and Publicity of the Antalya Metropolitan Municipality. With the application made to the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, it was determined that it had the features of a monumental tree, and it was registered as a monumental tree in 2021, and was taken under protection. It is 500 years old, 13m tall, and 110 cm in diameter.

The most intriguing feature of juniper trees is that they need a thrush, in order to continue to reproduce. Because thrushes take their food from juniper trees and throw them out as solid waste after digesting. In this way, the juniper trees reproduce with the seeds that fall into the soil and sprout. The thrush (Juniper bird) is named after the juniper tree. Juniper is a tree that normally grows at high altitudes. The fact that it was grown at sea level in Konyaaltı, and survived for centuries makes this specific juniper tree, different from other juniper trees.

### **Eastern Plane Tree** (*Platanus orientalis*)

It is a 700 years old tree that is 30m in height, 30 m in crown diameter, and 4.7m in trunk diameter, located in Kircami, Muratpaşa.

## LAST WORDS

The conservation of monumental trees, which are the common heritage of the society and connect the past with the present, is only possible by appropriating them to the society.

In this context, the identification and registration of monumental trees has great significance.

Detection and protection of monumental trees is crucial in order to pass them onto future generations. As in Antalya, we have monumental trees in many provinces of which we are unaware of their existence, and which do not qualify as monumental trees because they are not registered. Therefore, unfortunately, the necessary care and protection measures cannot be taken for these trees. This issue should be given more importance, and the species that have the characteristics of monumental trees should be registered according to policy decision of the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization "Central Commission for Conservation of Natural Assets, on the Determination of Monumental Trees to be Determined as Natural Heritage (No: 110)", published in the Official Newspaper, dated 24 October 2020 and numbered 31284.

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