This is the "Central Benson Garden" Tree Tour. It starts in the lawn area near the middle of a group of white boulders between the Parking Services parking lot and North Virginia Street and goes clockwise around a lawn area.

Benson Gardens was named for Dorothy Benson, who donated Benson Garden in 1946. Since then, there have been a number of landscaping projects here. This tour features a number of uncommonly-planted tree species not seen on other Tree Tours. Most of this tour has a "park-like" feel because the trees are separated by lawn, but next to North Virginia Street the landscaping is a little "wilder."

OK, let’s get started!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tree No.</th>
<th>Tree Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Giant Sequoia</strong>&lt;br&gt;Between the parking lot and North Virginia Street, in the lawn at number 1 on the map is the unmistakable form of Giant Sequoia (scientific name <em>Sequoia giganteum</em>), native to the western slope of the Sierra Nevada but planted all over campus because it has a beautiful conical shape when young and because it is one of the most quickly-growing trees in northern Nevada.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Japanese Flowering Cherry</strong>&lt;br&gt;Between this tree and the wide gravel path is a small tree with reddish bark with horizontal bands at number 2 on the map. This is Japanese Flowering Cherry (scientific name <em>Prunus serrulata</em>). Native to China, Korea and Japan, it is one of many cultivars, so we won't differentiate it farther here. These trees have pink buds which open to light pink flowers fading to white. These trees can get to 30 feet tall and wide. There are many of these trees planted between here and the street to your left.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Eastern White Pine</strong>&lt;br&gt;The bottom couple of feet the of trunk of the conifer at number 3 on the map lean, then straighten out. This is Eastern White Pine (scientific name <em>Pinus strobus</em>), native to eastern and central North America. It has five needles in a bundle, a characteristic of White Pines. This tree looks like it is going to fall over at any moment, but it probably is pretty solidly in place.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tree
No.

4

Colorado Blue Spruce

A few feet toward North Virginia Street and a few feet along the wide gravel path at number 4 is another conifer, this one with short gray-green needles and short cones. It is **Colorado Blue Spruce** (scientific name *Picea pungens* 'Glauca'), native to the Rocky Mountains. It grows quickly and has few pest problems, so it is widely planted in Reno. Note that the first branches are at about five feet from the ground. This enables groundskeepers to mow under the tree. This tree was probably planted around 1990.

5

Crabapple

Next to it, heading toward Lawlor Events Center, is a tree with dark green leaves and a dark trunk at number 5, **Crabapple** (scientific name *Malus sp.*). There are many cultivars of **Crabapple**, and they vary in leaf shape, flower color, and size and color of fruits. This particular tree has 1/2 inch fruits and long leaves.
Next to it at number 6 is a large tree with lobed leaves, Pin Oak (scientific name Quercus palustris), native to northeastern U.S. Pin Oak is a popularly-planted tree both on the campus and Reno, and, when in a good site and well-taken-care of, grows to be a very handsome tree like this tree of about 30 years age, with its deep lobes and good Fall color of yellow, orange and red (depending on the tree and year).

Head on the wide gravel path until you pass a dry rocky streambed, an artifice provided by landscapers. On the other side of it, at number 7, is another Colorado Blue Spruce. Judging from its size, this tree was probably planted about 2005. Note that the branches sweep down to the ground. If you limbed it up to mow under it at this size, the tree would likely not recover to be as beautiful as the tree at number 4.

Across the landscape timber boundary at number 8 is another Pin Oak, which was transplanted here only a few years ago. It is nowhere as full and beautiful as the one at number 6. Note that its top leans. Chances are that it was not doing well in its original site, so it is now here. Time will tell if it looks as good as number 6.

Head on the lawn area toward North Virginia Street. There is a medium-sized tree to your right at number 9 with compound leaves (leaves that have more than one leaflet, in this case 5 or 7). This is Velvet Ash (scientific name Fraxinus velutina), native to an area around the Mogollon Rim.
(look it up; it is spelled M-o-g-o-l-o-n). Velvet Ash has different leaves than the four Ash species visible to your left, and featured on the "Southwest Benson Garden" Tree Tour. This is the only Velvet Ash I have found on campus.

10

Thornless Honeylocust

Look toward North Virginia Street. Toward the end of the lawn area is another tree with compound leaves at number 10. This is **Thornless Honeylocust** (scientific name *Gleditsia triacanthos* 'Inermis'), native to eastern and midwestern U.S. This is a commonly-planted tree in this area of the campus. Its leaves have 20 to 30 rounded to oval leaflets, and this cultivar has no messy pods.

11

Russian Olive

Between the lawn area and North Virginia Street at number 11 is an area unlike the well-maintained lawn area. It seems to be particularly uncared-for. This is probably the "Xeriscape Area" mentioned in the Benson Garden description on the Arboretum's "Areas of Interest." It has several species of shrubs but only two of trees. The first is the long, thin-leaved **Russian Olive** (scientific name *Elaeagnus angustifolia*), native to central and western Asia. Its bark, on younger branches, is smooth and brown; it also may have thorns. This tree is used for a windbreak and for erosion control, and, if planted closely enough, can be used as a fence for livestock. Its gray-green leaves are a hint that it is very drought-tolerant.

11

Rocky Mountain Juniper

The other tree is a silver-gray conifer, **Rocky Mountain Juniper** (scientific name *Juniperus scopulorum*). It is native to the Rocky Mountains. Where present, its one-quarter- to one-half-inch blue berries make it easily identifiable as a Juniper. This tree is similar to Russian Olive in both climatic needs and uses.
Tree
No.

12 Northern Red Oak

From the Thornless Honeylocust, head toward the landscape boulder group. At number 12 is another tree with lobed leaves, **Northern Red Oak** (scientific name *Quercus rubra*), a native of eastern North America. This tree's leaves have shallower lobes than those of the Pin Oak at number 6. This tree, planted about the same time as number 6, is a more popularly-planted landscape tree today because it has fewer problems.

13 American Sycamore

Past this tree, at number 13, is the multrunked tree **American Sycamore** (scientific name *Platanus occidentalis*), native to eastern U.S. This is one of few trees of this species on campus, underplanted compared to **London Planetree**, a hybrid of this tree and **Oriental Planetree**. This tree's fruit is a single ball attached to the branch by a thin stalk a couple of inches long (London Planetree has two balls). Both trees typically have a single thick trunk and white and gray-green mottled bark, but this particular tree has thin trunks and rectangular plates on its whitish bark.

14 Crabapple

A few feet from this tree at number 14 is another **Crabapple**, this one with shorter and rounder leaves, and yellow/orange/pink fruits about an inch in diameter.
At the edge of the Xeriscape Area, a few feet away at number 15, is a conifer with vertical platy sprays of leaves and red-brown peeling bark. This is **Incense Cedar** (scientific name *Calocedrus decurrens*). This Sierra Nevada native is not really a Cedar, and that is a good example of why I am giving scientific names on my tree tours. It has fan-like branchlets. Its cones are very unusual; they have a central scale with two other scales curving away from it.

This concludes the "Central Benson Garden" Tree Tour.