

ADOPT-A-PARK TREE SPECIES LIST

CITY OF ANN ARBOR PARKS AND RECREATION

This list is an introduction to the tree species that have been pre-approved by [Adopt-a-Park](#) for planting projects or tree donations in Ann Arbor city parks. Species on this list may not be appropriate for the environmental conditions in every park and are subject to final approval from the City. After a species is proposed by a donor or resident, staff will consider the species' characteristics and site conditions to evaluate ecological implications, maintenance factors, and a species' projected ability to thrive. Our goal is for every tree planting to be a long-term success.

A tree planting changes the ecological environment and use of a park, and therefore must be approved. Residents interested in donating a tree to a city park should refer to the [Tree Donation Guide and Application](#) to learn about this process. Other circumstances should be discussed with the Adopt-a-Park Coordinator. This list can also serve as a reference for a [Special Park Project Proposal](#).

Each species' preferred growing conditions and natural characteristics are provided. A tree species should be chosen that is suitable for site conditions, to give the tree the best chance of thriving. Donors and residents are welcome to propose planting a species that is not present on this list.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Native to MI	Soil	Moisture			Height	Bloom Color	Comments
				W	M	D			
Birch, river	<i>Betula nigra</i>	No	L C	—			40-70'	Y-G	Native to southern US and east coast. Unique bark.
Birch, yellow	<i>Betula alleghaniensis</i>	Yes	S L C	—	—		45-75'	Pr-Y	Vibrant yellow in fall.
Blackgum	<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	Yes	L	—	—		30-45'	G-W	Vibrant red in fall. Slow growing.
Cedar, northern white	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	Yes	L	—	—		20-40'	None	Evergreen. Fragrant foliage.
Dogwood, flowering	<i>Cornus florida</i>	Yes	S L C	—	—		15-30'	W	Shade tolerant. Beautiful spring flowers. Red or purple fall foliage.
Elm, American	<i>Ulmus americana</i>	Yes	L	—	—		40-70'	R-G	Must be Dutch elm disease resistant variety.
Ginkgo (male)	<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>	No	S L	—	—		50-80'	Y-G	Native to China. Unique leaf shape.
Hackberry	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	Yes	S L	—	—		40-60'	Y-G	Small, edible fruit. Good wildlife food.

All species are appropriate for partial to full sun, unless otherwise noted.

Soil tolerance: S-sand, L-loam, C-clay (Loam is soil with roughly equal proportions of sand, silt, and clay)

Moisture: W-wet, M-moist, D-dry (Well-drained soils do not have high clay content and are not close to the water table)

Height: at mature age, different growth rates for each species

Bloom Color: Br-brown, G-green, P-pink, Pr-purple, R-red, S-silver, W-white, Y-yellow

Common Name	Scientific name	Native to MI	Soil	Moisture			Height	Bloom Color	Comment
				W	M	D			
Linden, American	<i>Tilia americana</i>	Yes	L	—			50-80'	Y	Shade tolerant. Fragrant flowers.
Maple, red	<i>Acer rubrum</i>	Yes	S L C	—			75-100'	R	Shade tolerant. Vibrant red in fall.
Maple, sugar	<i>Acer saccharum</i>	Yes	S L	—			50-80'	Y-G	Shade tolerant. Vibrant orange in fall.
Musclewood (American hornbeam)	<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>	Yes	L	—			10-30'	R-G	Prefers full to part shade. Unique bark.
Oak, black	<i>Quercus velutina</i>	Yes	L	—			55-70'	Y-G	Slow growing and long-lived. Important wildlife food.
Oak, bur	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	Yes	S L C	—			55-75'	Y-G	Slow growing and long-lived. Important wildlife food.
Oak, chinquapin	<i>Quercus muehlenbergii</i>	Yes	S L	—			40-60'	Y-G	Slow growing and long-lived. Important wildlife food.
Oak, northern red	<i>Quercus rubra</i>	Yes	S L	—			50-75'	Y	Vibrant red and orange in fall. Important wildlife food.
Oak, swamp white	<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	Yes	L C	—			45-60'	Y-G	Slow growing. Important wildlife food.
Pine, eastern white	<i>Pinus strobus</i>	Yes	L	—			50-80'	None	Evergreen. Fine feathery needles.
Redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Yes	S L C	—			10-25'	Pr	Vibrant spring flowers. Heart-shaped leaves.
Sycamore	<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>	Yes	S L C	—			75-100'	Y-G	Unique, mottled bark pattern/colors.
Tuliptree	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	Yes	S L	—			45-90'	Y-G	Beautiful flowers. Unique leaf shape.

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American elm

American elms are susceptible to the fatal Dutch elm disease and therefore were not recommended for many years since its introduction in the 1950's. After much research, resistance from the disease has been demonstrated by several hybrid species that are a cross of American, Asian, and European elms. The specific variety must be approved.

Blackgum (*Nyssa sylvatica*)

A small-to-medium tree that grows in a pyramidal shape. Prefers wet or moist soils but can tolerate drier conditions. Not suitable for sites that might experience harsh winds (such as a hill with no windbreak). Has shiny, dark green leaves in summer and turns to orange or red in fall. Small and insignificant flowers. Fruits attract birds and other wildlife.

River birch (*Betula nigra*)

A fast growing, medium-sized tree. Can grow as a single trunk with a pyramidal shape or multi-trunked with a more irregular shape. Tolerates drier soils but prefers moist conditions, including semi-aquatic. Has unique pinkish-brown and flaky bark, with diamond-shaped leaves. Flowers are small and insignificant. Native to southern US and the east coast.

Yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*)

A large canopy tree generally found in wet or moist soils but can tolerate drier conditions. Has dull, dark green leaves that turn vibrant yellow in the fall. Has unique, peeling bark. Long lived. Small and insignificant flowers.

Northern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*)

Also known as American arborvitae. A small-to-medium evergreen tree that grows in a dense, conical or narrow shape. Prefers moist, well-drained soils and is intolerant of drought. Best in full sun with limited shade. Evergreen foliage is fragrant and is retained over winter. Provides food for wildlife in winter.

Flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*)

A small tree that is typically found in the forest understory but can tolerate full sun. Prefers moist but well-drained soils. Has a relatively broad shape. Blooms in April or May with beautiful white flowers (which are actually bracts, a type of modified leaf). Leaves become bright red or dark purple in fall. Fruits attract birds.

Ginkgo (male) (*Ginkgo biloba*)




Grows slowly to become a large tree that tolerates a wide range of soil conditions and disturbed urban environments (such as compacted soil and de-icing salt). Has unique, fan-shaped leaves that turn yellow in fall. Only males permitted as female trees produce foul-smelling fruits. Ginkgos are the only surviving member of a group of ancient plants that inhabited earth up to 150 million years ago. Native to China.

Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*)

A medium-to-large tree that tolerates wet and dry soils but prefers moist, well-drained conditions. Develops a beautiful, wide canopy. Has light green, diamond shaped leaves and small, insignificant flowers. Grows small, edible fruits that taste like dates and provide food for wildlife.



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American linden (*Tilia americana*)

A medium-to-large tree that grows in a pyramidal shape. Prefers moist and well-drained soils but will tolerate some drought. Generally intolerant of poor urban conditions (such as compacted soil and de-icing salt). Leaves are dark and slightly heart-shaped. Has attractive, small yellow flowers in spring that have a pleasant fragrance and provide pollen and nectar for bees.

Red maple (*Acer rubrum*)

A medium-to-large tree that tolerates a variety of soil conditions but prefers medium to wet, well-drained soils. Very cold hardy and somewhat shade tolerant. Leaves emerge as red, then become dark green and turn to vibrant orange or red in fall. Flowers are small and red.

Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*)

A medium-to-large tree with a beautiful round and symmetrical form. Will grow in a variety of soils but prefers moist and well-drained conditions. Somewhat shade tolerant. Generally intolerant of poor urban conditions (such as compacted soils and de-icing salt). Has dark green leaves that turn a brilliant yellow, orange or red in fall. Small and insignificant flowers.

Musclewood (*Carpinus caroliniana*)

Also known as American hornbeam. A small-to-medium, slow growing understory tree. Requires full to part shade and prefers moist and nutrient-rich soils. Often grows multi-stemmed and twisted. Bark is smooth grey. Has dark green leaves that turn yellow, orange, or red in fall. Flowers are small and insignificant. Small nuts provide good wildlife food in winter.

Black oak (*Quercus velutina*)

Slow growing and matures to a large canopy tree. Does best in dry to medium soils that are well-drained. Tolerates drought. Has very dark colored bark and leaves that are red in spring, green in summer and yellow in fall. Flowers are small and insignificant. Acorns are an important wildlife food.

Bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)

A large, beautiful tree with a spreading canopy. Slow growing. Can adapt to a wide range of soil conditions that are well-drained. Tolerates drought. Flowers are small and insignificant. Acorns are an important wildlife food.

Chinquapin oak (*Quercus muhlenbergii*)

A medium-sized tree with a round canopy. Tolerates a variety of soil conditions if they are well-drained. Does not do well in compacted soils and should be avoided for sites that experience heavy traffic. Leaves are dark-green and flowers are small and insignificant. Acorns are an important wildlife food.

Northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*)

A medium-to-large tree that does best in well-drained soils that have dry to medium moisture levels. Is cold hardy and fast growing for an oak. Leaves emerge as red-pink in spring, become green in summer and becomes brilliant red and orange in fall. Flowers are small and insignificant. Acorns are an important wildlife food.



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Swamp white oak (*Quercus bicolor*)

A medium-to-large tree with a symmetrical and rounded canopy. Does best in medium to wet soil conditions and can do well in poorly drained sites. Will also tolerate some drought. Dark green leaves and small, insignificant flowers. Acorns are an important wildlife food.

Eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*)

A medium-to-large evergreen tree that is fast growing and long-lived. Starts as a pyramidal shape and matures to be more oval. Prefers soils that have medium moisture levels and are well-drained. Its long, bluish-green needles are soft to the touch.

Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)

A relatively small tree with low branches and a rounded shape. Prefers medium-moisture and well-drained soils. Avoid really wet or poorly-drained conditions. Leaves are heart-shaped and small spring flowers are vibrant purple.

Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*)




A fast-growing tree that becomes very large. Prefers medium to wet soils. Intolerant of drought. The mottled white, green and brown bark is its distinguishing feature. Flowers are small and insignificant. Fruits are clustered together into a seed-like ball that transitions from green, to red, to brown.

Tuliptree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)

A large and stately tree that is relatively fast growing and develops a pyramidal shape. Prefers moist and well-drained soils. Leaves are bright green and uniquely shaped. Has large and beautiful spring flowers that are green, yellow and orange. Flowers resemble tulips and are fragrant.



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