

# COMMUNITY TREES

## SPECIES GUIDE

### DECIDUOUS SHRUBS



**American Elderberry**, *Sambucus canadensis*

**Size:** Height up to 4m, Spread up to 4m • **Light:** Partial Sun to Full Sun • **Moisture:** Dry, Normal, Moist, Wet, Drought and Flood Tolerant • **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Clay, Rocky • **Soil pH:** Normal

**Description:** American Elderberry is a fast-growing shrub or small tree with white spring flowers that turn into deep purple berries, attracting wildlife and usable for jams and jellies. It has compound leaves that yellow in fall and spread by shallow roots and suckering. Hardy and adaptable, it thrives in a range of soils and sun conditions, tolerates drought and flooding, and naturally grows along shorelines and open forests.



**Fragrant Sumac**, *Rhus aromatica*

**Size:** Height 1-2m, Spread 1.5 - 3m • **Light:** Partial Sun to Full Sun • **Moisture:** Dry, Normal, Moist, Drought Tolerant, Flood Tolerant • **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Clay, Rocky • **Soil pH:** Normal

**Description:** Fragrant Sumac is a compact, multi-stemmed shrub with aromatic, citrus-scented leaves that attract butterflies and change from green to vibrant yellows, reds, and purples in autumn. It produces yellow spring flowers, red hairy berries that persist through winter, and male catkins in the fall. With shallow, fast-spreading roots, it's excellent for stabilizing slopes and shorelines, yet is less aggressive and easy to maintain compared to other Sumacs.



**Pussy Willow**, *Salix discolor*

**Size:** Height 6m, Spread up to 5m • **Light:** Partial Sun to Full Sun • **Moisture:** Moist, Wet, Flood Tolerant (well drained) • **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Clay • **Soil pH:** Normal

**Description:** The Pussy Willow is a fast-growing, multi-stemmed shrub or small tree up to 6 m tall, valued for bank stabilization due to its extensive, water-loving root system. It produces fuzzy purple-brown catkins before leaf emergence, which develop into long-beaked, hairy seed capsules, and has hairy, reddish-brown branches and lance-shaped leaves with toothed edges. Thriving in moist soils from full sun to part shade, it naturally grows in wet meadows, swamps, and along shorelines across Canada.



**Shadblow Serviceberry**, *Amelanchier canadensis*

**Size:** Height 3-5m, Spread 3m • **Light:** Partial Sun to Full Sun • **Moisture:** Moist, Wet, Flood Tolerant (well drained) • **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Clay • **Soil pH:** Acidic, Normal

**Description:** The Shadblow Serviceberry is a multi-stemmed shrub with showy white spring flowers that turn into blueberry-sized, deep purple-blue fruits by fall. Its dark green leaves become vibrant orange-red in autumn, and it attracts wildlife while stabilizing shorelines. Low-maintenance and hardy, it thrives in moist, well-drained soils, tolerates drought and occasional flooding, and adds striking seasonal color to landscapes.



**Winterberry**, *Ilex verticillata*

**Size:** Height 3m, Spread 1m • **Light:** Partial Sun to Full Sun • **Moisture:** Normal, Moist, Flood Tolerant • **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Clay, Humus • **Soil pH:** Acidic, Normal

**Description:** Winterberry is known for its bright red berries that persist through winter and feed birds and small mammals, though only female plants near males produce fruit. It blooms small, greenish-white flowers in early summer and spreads easily, forming colonies, with roots that help stabilize soil and control erosion. Adaptable to wet soils and partial sun, it naturally grows in wetlands, along rivers, and in marshy areas.

### DECIDUOUS TREES



**American Ash**, *Sorbus americana*

**Size:** Height 10m, Spread 3m • **Light:** Partial Sun to Full Sun • **Moisture:** Dry, Normal, Moist • **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Clay, Rocky • **Soil pH:** Acidic

**Description:** American mountain ash is a medium-sized tree with clusters of small white spring flowers, and bright red-orange berries that attract birds and other wildlife. It grows in a variety of habitats from moist swamps to rocky hillsides, and can tolerate dry soils, though growth is slower in harsher conditions. Its seeds are dispersed by birds, helping it colonize new areas. Despite its name, ***the American mountain ash isn't a true Ash tree, therefore isn't susceptible to infestation from the Emerald Ash Borer.***



Balsam Poplar, *Populus balsamifera*  
**Size:** Height 25m • **Light:** Partial Sun to Full Sun • **Moisture:** Normal, Moist, Wet, Flood Tolerant  
• **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy • **Soil pH:** Normal

**Description:** Balsam poplar is an early succession tree that is quick to establish after disturbance and is easily recognized by its shiny, pointed leaves, silvery resin-spotted undersides, and sticky balsam-scented buds. It supports many wildlife species by providing food, shelter, and materials for animals such as birds, small mammals, and beavers. The tree is also valuable to people, supplying lightweight wood for paper and crates, and producing resin that bees use to help disinfect their hives.



Black Cherry, *Prunus serotina*  
**Size:** Height 20m-30m • **Light:** Partial Sun to Full Sun • **Moisture:** Normal, Moist, Wet, Flood Tolerant • **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Clay • **Soil pH:** Normal, Acidic

**Description:** This tree is a great option to add visual interest to a yard. Cut it back every 2-3 years to grow as a shrub. The mature bark looks like burnt cornflakes. It produces small, white flowers in the spring, and dark, red cherries in the summer. Wildlife, especially birds, like to snack on the bitter berries, and humans can use the fruit to flavour alcoholic beverages and jams. This small tree is valued for lumber.



Bur Oak, *Quercus macrocarpa*  
**Size:** Height 3m, Spread 24m • **Light:** Partial Sun to Full Sun • **Moisture:** Moist, Drought Tolerant (well drained)  
• **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Rocky • **Soil pH:** Normal

**Description:** Bur Oaks are a keystone species, meaning that a single tree can have a significant positive impact on supporting the ecosystem around it. This is a large tree, providing lots of shade. The truck tends to grow tall and straight in deep soils and small and twisted in shallow soils. Bur Oaks grow well in cities, however, have deep roots, therefore should be planted away from underground pipes. Although Oak Wilt Disease (an invasive fungus) was found recently in Southern Ontario, it is still encouraged to continue planting this species far apart from other oaks. To minimize the risk of catching this disease, prune only before April and after July which is when the disease's carries (beetles) are less active.



Paper Birch, *Betula papyrifera*  
**Size:** Height 15-25m • **Light:** Partial Sun to Full Sun • **Moisture:** Moist, Wet, Flood Tolerant  
• **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy • **Soil pH:** Normal

**Description:** Distinctive smooth, chalk white bark that peels in horizontal layers adds nice visual interest in yards. Rather than actual flowers, this tree produces long, green-brown, slim catkins. The White Birch is resistant to most diseases. The green leaves turn yellow in the fall. It grows best in full sun, moist, well-drained soil, and on cool, north or east facing slopes. Can tolerate some occasional flooding but not clay soils or shade. Wildlife and birds like to snack on the buds, leaves and seeds.



Pin Oak, *Quercus palustres*  
**Size:** Height 20m • **Light:** Full Sun • **Moisture:** Moist, Wet, Flood Tolerant  
• **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Clay • **Soil pH:** Normal, Acidic

**Description:** The Pin Oak has deeply lobed, glossy leaves and a distinctive branching pattern, with upper limbs reaching upward and lower branches drooping, giving it a rugged look. It is native to southern Ontario's Carolinian Zone and produces small acorns that feed wildlife such as deer, squirrels, turkeys, and ducks. The tree is named for its short, pin-like branchlets and provides strong wood used for furniture, flooring, and cabinetry.



Red Maple, *Acer rubrum*  
**Size:** Height 12-25m, Spread 5m • **Light:** Partial Sun to Full Sun • **Moisture:** Normal, Moist, Wet, Drought and Flood Tolerant • **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Clay • **Soil pH:** Normal

**Description:** The Red Maple is the most widespread and common deciduous tree throughout Eastern and Central North America. Adaptable to most habitats, but prefers moist, slightly acidic soils. The leaves become bright green throughout the growing season, then as the name suggests, they turn bright red in the fall.



Silver Maple, *Acer saccharinum*  
**Size:** Height 30m, Spread 10-20m • **Light:** Partial Sun to Full Sun • **Moisture:** Moist, Wet, Drought and Flood Tolerant • **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Clay • **Soil pH:** Normal, Acidic

**Description:** The Silver Maple is fast growing with a full, bushy appearance to provide lots of shade. This tree grows best in rich, moist soils, but is tolerant of flooding and short periods of drought. It produces beautiful, red petal-less flowers in the spring. Silver Maples are best in rural environments, due to its many leaves that seasonally fall and deep roots which gravitate to (sewer) pipes.



Sugar Maple, *Acer saccharum*  
**Size:** Height 12-35m, Spread 5m • **Light:** Partial Sun to Full Sun • **Moisture:** Dry, Normal, Moist  
• **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Clay, Rocky • **Soil pH:** Normal, Acidic

**Description:** The Sugar Maple, Canada's national tree, is famous for its iconic five-lobed leaves that turn brilliant fall colors and its sweet sap used to make maple syrup. It produces winged seeds called keys, provides food and habitat for wildlife, and yields a hard, strong wood used for furniture, flooring, and musical instruments. Known for its long lifespan, over 200 years, the tree thrives in deep, rich soils and is a classic symbol of Canadian forests.





Sycamore, *Platanus occidentalis*

**Size:** Height 35m, Spread 20-30m • **Light:** Partial Sun to Full Sun • **Moisture:** Normal, Moist, Flood Tolerant  
• **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Clay, Rocky • **Soil pH:** Normal

**Description:** American Sycamore is a massive, fast-growing tree known for its striking, patchwork bark that flakes to reveal white and cream layers, and its large, maple-like leaves with prominent stipules. It produces ball-shaped clusters of seeds that persist through winter and provide food for some birds and small mammals. Native to southern Ontario's rich bottomlands and floodplains, the tree also yields wood used for furniture, veneer, and particle board, and can live up to 250 years.



Tuliptree, *Liriodendron tulipifera*

**Size:** Height 35m, Spread 15m • **Light:** Full Sun • **Moisture:** Normal, Moist, wet, Flood Tolerant  
• **Soil:** Loamy, Humus • **Soil pH:** Normal

**Description:** The Tuliptree is a fast-growing, long-lived tree known for its tulip-shaped yellow-green flowers, broad lobed leaves that turn yellow in fall, and tall, straight trunk. Its seeds provide food for birds and small mammals. Native to a few areas of Southern Ontario, it thrives in deep, moist soils and is valued as an ornamental and wildlife-supporting tree.



Eastern White Cedar, *Thuja occidentalis*

**Size:** Height 15m, Spread 5m • **Light:** Partial Sun, Full Sun • **Moisture:** Dry, Normal, Moist, wet, Drought & Flood Tolerant • **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Clay, Rocky • **Soil pH:** Normal, Basic, Acidic

**Description:** The Eastern White Cedar prefers moist, basic soils; however, it is a hardy species often found in 'challenging' environments. The exception to this species adaptability is with salt pollution. These trees have been known to live for hundreds of years. The flat, smooth needles can be used to make cedar tea, which is high in Vitamin C. Live Cedar wood is susceptible to rot, but is known for the opposite when dried. Great habitat and food source for birds and wildlife. This tree can be used for landscape hedges.



Eastern White Pine, *Pinus strobus*

**Size:** Height 30m, Spread up to 14m • **Light:** Partial Sun and Full Sun • **Moisture:** Dry, Normal, Moist • **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Rocky • **Soil pH:** Normal, Acidic

**Description:** This tree is a good choice for reforestation of a historically cleared area. It is also popular for landscaping, Christmas trees, and timber. Early settlers preferred tall, straight White Pine trunks to create ship masts for the British Royal Navy. Designated as Ontario's tree, the White Pine is adaptable to most soil conditions.



Red Pine, *Pinus resinosa*

**Size:** Height 20-30m, Spread 5m • **Light:** Full Sun • **Moisture:** Dry, Normal, Drought Tolerant  
• **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Rocky • **Soil pH:** Normal, Acidic

**Description:** This tree has a deep, widespread root system that prefers sunny, dry, sandy soils. For this reason, the Red Pine is a good choice for windbreaks, controlling erosion, and stabilizing shorelines. Its is known for its strong wood, therefore is a popular choice for timber uses. The Red Pine is tolerant of strong winds and deer grazing, but not shade, salt and pollution.



Tamarack, *Larix laricina*

**Size:** Height 20m, Spread 5m • **Light:** Partial and Full Sun • **Moisture:** Normal, Moist, Wet, Flood Tolerant • **Soil:** Sandy, Loamy, Clay, Rocky, Humus • **Soil pH:** Normal, Acidic

**Description:** The Tamarack is an Ontario native tree species, also known as the American Larch. Don't be alarmed when this tree drops its needles in the fall. It's a deciduous conifer; therefore, the needles will grow back in the spring! Tamarack wood is known for being decay resistant. The bark contains tannins, which can be extracted for leather tanning. It prefers wet conditions however is still quite tolerant of most conditions except drought and shade.



White Spruce, *Picea glauca*

**Size:** Height 20m, Spread 5m • **Light:** Partial Sun, Full Sun, Shade • **Moisture:** Dry, Normal, Moist, Wet • **Soil:** Sandy, Clay, Rocky • **Soil pH:** Normal, Acidic

**Description:** This hardy, widespread North American tree species is adaptable to most habitats. However, young trees are vulnerable to frost damage and therefore should be planted in a protected area. The White Spruce makes for a great outdoor Christmas tree, landscape tree, privacy screen and windscreen. Its full foliage creates great habitat for birds and wildlife.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT QUINTE CONSERVATION'S  
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