



# TREES FOR EASTERN NEBRASKA

The following species are recommended for areas in the eastern half of Nebraska and/or typically receive more than 20" of moisture per year. Size Range: The size range indicated for each plant is the expected average mature height x spread for Nebraska.

## Large Deciduous Trees—typically over 40' tall

- Aspen, Bigtooth & Quaking** - *Populus grandidentata* & *P. tremuloides* (both native to Nebraska/U.S. with green/white bark and distinctive fluttery leaves; a hybrid of the two is native to the Niobrara River; can be golden-yellow in fall; short-lived with re-sprouting from roots; 40'x 25')
- Baldcypress** - *Taxodium distichum* (a graceful, deciduous conifer with attractive papery bark; great for wet areas; 50'x 30')
- Beech, American** - *Fagus grandiflora* (eastern U.S. native; attractive smooth bark; needs fertile, moist soil and protected sites; 50'x40')  
European Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) is very similar and considered easier to grow in Neb; 45'x35'.
- Birch, River** - *Betula nigra* (exfoliating cinnamon brown bark; low-growing branches; prefers rich soil & consistent moisture; 50'x45')
- Catalpa, Northern** - *Catalpa speciosa* (native; tough tree; large, heart-shaped leaves, showy flowers, long seed pods; very adaptable; 50'x 35')
- Coffeetree, Kentucky** - *Gymnocladus dioica* (native; amazingly adaptable; coarse branching and beautiful winter form; 50'x 40')
- Cottonwood, Eastern** - *Populus deltoides* (majestic native; not for extremely dry sites; avoid most cultivars; 80'x 60')
- Elm, American** - *Ulmus americana* (disease resistant varieties include 'Princeton' & 'Jefferson'; 50'x50')
- Elm, 'Accolade'** (complex hybrid) - looks like American elm; Morton Arboretum hybrid of *U. japonica* and *U. wilsoniana*; 50'x 40'
- Elm, 'Triumph'** - *Ulmus x 'Triumph'* (an attractive hybrid; very adaptable; vigorous upright growth habit; 60'x 40')
- Filbert, Turkish** - *Corylus colurna* (pyramidal shape in youth, eventually rounded; scaly bark; interesting winter catkins; 45'x 35')
- Ginkgo** - *Ginkgo biloba* (distinctive fan-shaped leaf; yellow fall color; tolerant of poor soils; female trees produce malodorous fruit; 45'x 35')
- Hackberry** - *Celtis occidentalis* (great native tree with legendary tolerance; matures to stately rounded crown; interesting corky bark; 65'x50')
- Hickory, Bitternut** - *Carya cordiformis* (our most common native hickory; sulphur-yellow buds; deserves to be planted more; 50'x 30')
- Hickory, Shagbark** - *Carya ovata* (native to se Neb; shaggy bark forms on mature trees; yellow in fall; transplant when small; 50'x45')
- Hickory, Shellbark** - *Carya laciniosa* (very similar to shagbark hickory but with a bigger nut and larger growing; 60'x 50')
- Honeylocust** - *Gleditsia triacanthos* (a very tough, adaptable tree that thrives on neglect; choose seedless/thornless types; 70'x60')
- Larch, Japanese/Common** - *Larix kaempferi* or *L. decidua* (deciduous conifers; cold hardy; prefer moist soils; 60'x 40')
- Linden, American** - *Tilia americana* (native; large heart-shaped leaves; fragrant flowers a favorite of bees; tough; 60'x 40')
- Linden, Silver** - *Tilia tomentosa* (dark, shiny leaves have silvery underside; resistant to Japanese Beetle feeding; 50'x 40')
- Magnolia, Cucumber tree** - *Magnolia acuminata* (thick lustrous leaves; cucumber like fruit; 40'x 30'; the green-yellow flowers are not showy, however the hybrid form 'Elizabeth' was selected for its very attractive yellow flowers)
- Maple, Freeman** - *Acer x freemanii* (a fast growing hybrid between red and silver maples; 'Autumn Blaze' a common cultivar; 70'x50')
- Maple, Miyabe** - *Acer miyabei* (thick, glossy foliage turns yellow in fall; 'State Street' nice upright cultivar; 40'x 30')
- Maple, Norway** - *Acer platanoides* (over planted but still good on many sites; common street tree in Lincoln and Omaha; 40'x 35')
- Maple, Red** - *Acer rubrum* (a popular tree with nice red fall color; prefers consistent moisture; not drought tolerant; 45'x40')
- Maple, Sugar** - *Acer saccharum* (beautiful tree that should be planted more; orange fall color; 50'x 50'; choose hardy varieties such as Caddo, 'Fall Fiesta', 'Green Mountain', 'Legacy', and 'Table Rock'; Black Maple (*Acer nigrum*) is similar with a more upright habit, also worth planting)
- Oak, Black** - *Quercus velutina* (native to SE Neb; glossy, dark-green leaf; great spring and fall color; a terrific oak; 50'x 45')
- Oak, Bur** - *Quercus macrocarpa* (outstanding native; big and majestic; very tough and reliable; 60'x 75')
- Oak, Chinkapin** - *Quercus muehlenbergii* (great native tree; tolerates high pH soils; narrow, chestnut-like leaves; 50'x 40')
- Oak, English** - *Quercus robur* (good across Nebraska; many forms; 60'x50')
- Oak, Hill's** - *Quercus ellipsoidalis* (Minnesota, Wisconsin native; good, early red/maroon fall color; 50'x 35')
- Oak, Overcup** - *Quercus lyrata* (similar to bur oak, but prefers moist sites; avoid high pH soils; 60'x 45')
- Oak, Red** - *Quercus rubra* (a very reliable native oak with large lustrous leaves and beautiful red fall color; 65' x 55')
- Oak, Scarlet** - *Quercus coccinea* (similar in form to pin oak; beautiful scarlet color in fall; avoid high pH soils; 60'x 45')
- Oak, Shingle** - *Quercus imbricaria* (KS, MO native; distinctive narrow leaves that are held through the winter; 50'x 45')
- Oak, Shumard** - *Quercus shumardii* (similar to red oak but rarely planted; drought tolerant; good fall color; 60'x 45')
- Oak, Swamp White** - *Quercus bicolor* (attractive glossy leaves with silvery underside; good for wet soils; avoid high pH soils; 60'x 50')
- Oak, White** - *Quercus alba* (majestic tree native to SE Neb; dusty red fall color; durable and long lived; avoid high pH; 70'x 60')
- Osage Orange** - *Maclura pomifera* (a very durable and drought tolerant tree with lustrous, dark green leaves; thorny; 50'x 45')
- Pagodatre, Japanese** - *Sophora japonica* (uniformly round; attractive, late summer flowers in creamy panicles; 40'x 30')
- Pecan** - *Carya illinoensis* (an underutilized hickory; grows fast and tall; transplant when small; 70'x 60')
- Sweetgum** - *Liquidambar styraciflua* (upright habit; maple-like leaves; interesting spiked seed balls; nice fall color; SE Neb only; 60'x 40')
- Sycamore** - *Platanus occidentalis* (tough native; beautiful mottled and creamy/white bark; good on wet sites; 80'x 70';  
London Planetree (*Platanus x acerifolia*) is very similar to sycamore but with a more creamy bark at maturity; 70'x 50')
- Tuliptree** - *Liriodendron tulipifera* (distinctive leaves and tulip-like orange-yellow flowers; leaves can turn butter yellow in fall; 60'x 45')
- Walnut, Black** - *Juglans nigra* (native; proven throughout Nebraska; tough and reliable; good lumber tree; 60'x 45')
- Zelkova** - *Zelkova serrata* (related to elm; attractive smooth bark; upright habit when young; glossy leaves; 40'x 30')



# TREES FOR EASTERN NEBRASKA

## Small & Medium Deciduous Trees—typically under 40' tall

- Alder, Black (common)** - *Alnus glutinosa* (useful for wet soils and water's edge; attractive glossy leaves; cone-like fruit; 30'x 20')
- Birch, Sweet** - *Betula lenta* (eastern U.S. native; one of the best birches; beautiful yellow fall color; reddish-brown bark)
- Black Gum** - *Nyssa sylvatica* (doing well in SE Neb; handsome foliage turns red-purple in fall; interesting wavy, horizontal branches; 30'x 25')
- Buckeye, Ohio** - *Aesculus glabra* (native; very tough & adaptable; rounded form; interesting 'buckeye' fruit; 30'x 30')
- Cherry, Black** - *Prunus serotina* (overlooked Neb native; fast growing; handsome reddish bark; small cherries relished by song birds; 45'x 35')
- Chestnut, Chinese** - *Castanea mollissima* (similar to American Chestnut but smaller and more rounded; 35'x 30')
- Chokecherry** - *Prunus virginiana* (tough reliable native; suckering habit; 'Canada Red' a purple-leaf form; 25'x20')
- Crabapple** - *Malus* spp. (dozens of cultivars available; consider disease resistant types with persistent fruit such as 'Adams', 'Cardinal', 'Prairiefire', 'Don Wyman', 'Harvest Gold', 'Red Jewel', 'Pink Spires' to name a few)
- Dogwood, Corneliancherry** - *Cornus mas* (tough, reliable; large shrub or small tree; early yellow flowers; red fruit; 15'x 15')
- Dogwood, Flowering** - *Cornus florida* (SE Neb only as it needs extra protection; attractive but unreliable flowers; 15'x 10')
- Dogwood, Pagoda** - *Cornus alternifolia* (beautiful, horizontally layered small tree or large shrub; short-lived; 15'x 15')
- Elm, David ('Discovery')** - *Ulmus davidiana* var. *japonica* (very cold tolerant; rounded habit; glossy green; 45'x 45')
- Hawthorn, Cockspur** - *Crataegus crusgalli* (nice white flowers; glossy green leaves; abundant red fruit; 15'x 15'; variety *inermis* is a thornless form and Lavalley Hawthorn (*Crataegus x lavalleyi*) is a striking hybrid that grows 15'x 10')
- Hawthorn, Downy** - *Crataegus mollis* (Neb native; downy leaves in spring; low, spreading habit; 15'x 15')
- Hawthorn, Washington** - *Crataegus phaenopyrum* (E; attractive foliage, flower and fruit; tough; relatively disease free; 20'x 20')
- Hophornbeam, American** - *Ostrya virginiana* (Neb native; common in forest understory; shaggy bark; yellow fall color; hops like fruit; 25'x 20')
- Hornbeam, American** - *Carpinus caroliniana* (distinctive sinewy-smooth steel gray bark; low spreading habit; 20'x 20')
- Lilac, Japanese Tree** - *Syringa reticulata* (nice ornamental with fragrant white flower clusters in late spring; cherry-like bark)
- Lilac, Pekin** - *Syringa pekinensis* (creamy white flowers; attractive, flaky bark; similar to Jap. tree lilac; 20'x 15')
- Maackia, Amur** - *Maackia amurensis* (seldom seen legume; worth a closer look; green bark; attractive summer flowers; 25'x 20')
- Magnolia, Flowering** - *Magnolia* spp. (hardy magnolias include Saucer Magnolia (*Magnolia x soulangiana*) with attractive white flowers and natural rounded habit to 20'x 15'; and Loebner Magnolia (*Magnolia x loebneri*) with early white flowers; 15-20'x 15-20')
- Maple, Paperbark** - *Acer griseum* (small tree; cinnamon red exfoliating bark; needs protected sites; 15'x15')
- Maple, Shantung** - *Acer truncatum* (attractive star-shaped leaves; rounded form; underused ornamental; 20'x20')
- Maple, Three-flower** - *Acer triflorum* (an underused maple with papery bark; 30'x 25')
- Oak, Dwarf Chinkapin** - *Quercus prinoides* (se NE native; variable habit but usually shrubby; prolific acorn producer; loves heat; 15-20'x 10-15')
- Oak, Mongolian** - *Quercus mongolica* (similar in appearance to Bur Oak but shorter stature; performing well in N. Dakota; 50'x 45')
- Pawpaw** - *Asimina triloba* (SE NE native understory tree; edible mushy fruits; colony former; SE Neb primarily; 20' x 15')
- Persimmon** - *Diospyros virginiana* (native to e. G.P.; distinctive blocky bark; tasty fruit; prefers moist, fertile soil; 30'x 20')
- Redbud** - *Cercis canadensis* (native; attractive purple flowers in early spring; select from hardy seed source; 20'x 15')
- Serviceberry (Juneberry)** - *Amelanchier* spp. (serviceberries are multi-season plants with early-spring white flowers, glossy leaves, tasty fruit and nice fall color; many cultivars available including 'Autumn Brilliance'; wide size range from 10-20'x 10-20')
- Smoketree, American** - *Cotinus obovatus* (blue-green leaves; yellow-orange fall color; plummy, smoke-like flowers; 20'x 15')
- Willow, Laurel** - *Salix pentandra* (attractive, glossy foliage; fast growth; needs consistent moisture; short lived; 35'x 30')
- Yellowwood** - *Cladrastis kentukea* (unique creamy-white, panicked flowers; attractive smooth bark; 35'x 35')

## Evergreen Trees

- Douglasfir** - *Pseudotsuga menziesii* var. *glauca* (soft blue-green needles; distinctive cones; graceful habit; avoid open, windswept sites; 50'x 30')
- Fir, Canaan** - *Abies balsamea* var. *phanerolepis* (common Christmas tree; nice specimens in eastern 1/3 of NE; 45'x 20')
- Fir, Concolor** - *Abies concolor* (attractive blue-green, long, upswept needles; most reliable fir for Nebraska; 50'x 25')
- Fir, Korean** - *Abies koreana* (beautiful blue cones; very graceful; needs to be tested more; 50'x 25')
- Juniper, Chinese** - *Juniperus chinensis* (adaptable and easy to grow; tree forms include 'Spartan' and 'Keteleer'; 15-25'x 10-15')
- Pine, Bosnian** - *Pinus heldreichii* var. *leucodermis* (short needles, tufted branch tips; dark green; 45'x 30')
- Pine, Domingo** - *Pinus* x 'Domingo' (white pine hybrid that's doing well in eastern Neb; blue-green foliage; 50'x 40')
- Pine, Eastern White** - *Pinus strobus* (tolerates wetter conditions than most pines; nice soft needles)
- Pine, Japanese White** - *Pinus parviflora* (graceful open natural habit; attractive large cones; 30'x 20')
- Pine, Korean** - *Pinus koraiensis* (edible nut; soft, attractive needles; 40'x 30')
- Pine, Limber** - *Pinus flexilis* (native; slow growing; soft needles; very flexible branches; plant on well-drained soils; 50'x 30')
- Pine, Ponderosa** - *Pinus ponderosa* (native; best on well-drained soils; attractive cinnamon-brown-black bark; 65'x 30')
- Pine, Red** - *Pinus resinosa* (Minnesota native; slow growing; reddish bark; several trees at Halsey, Maskenthine, UNL; 40'x 30')
- Pine, Southwestern White** - *Pinus reflexa* (graceful five-needle pine; 'Vanderwolfs' a common form; 35'x 20')
- Pine, Swiss Stone** - *Pinus cembra* (to 40' tall; seldom seen; edible nut; soft foliage; 'Chalet' common selection)



# TREES FOR EASTERN NEBRASKA

- Spruce, Black Hills** - *Picea glauca* var. *densata* (nice alternative to blue spruce; tolerates tough sites and conditions)  
**Spruce, Colorado** - *Picea pungens* (the old standby; many cultivars with wide color and habit range; somewhat overplanted)  
**Spruce, Norway** - *Picea abies* (pendulous (weeping) branch tips; tolerates moist sites; largest of the spruce growing to 70'x 40')  
**Spruce, Serbian** - *Picea omorika* (upright habit; weeping, graceful branches; attractive dark cones; slower growing; 35'x 18')  
**Redcedar, Eastern** - *Juniperus virginiana* (Eastern Nebraska's only native evergreen; attractive bark; good for wildlife; 40'x 30'; 'Taylor' is a very narrow cultivar from Nebraska 30'x5'; 'Canaerti' has distinctive tufted branches)

## Trees for the Collector—uncommon in Nebraska but worth a try in the right location

- Ash, Manchurian** - *Fraxinus mandshurica* (from Asia; upright growth; drought tolerant; nice yellow fall color; 'Mancana' common cultivar; this species evolved with Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and is considered resistant to it; 40'x 30')  
**Birch, Paper** - *Betula papyrifera* (native to Niobrara valley; bark exfoliates in papery strips; prefers cool, moist root zone; 40'x 30')  
**Birch, Rocky Mountain** - *Betula occidentalis* (native NW Neb; attractive cherry-like bark; prefers part shade and even moisture; 15'x15')  
**Buckeye, Red** - *Aesculus pavia* (large shrub or small tree; attractive red flowers; glossy foliage; 15'x 12')  
**Buckeye, Yellow** - *Aesculus flava* (similar to Ohio buckeye, but taller and with smooth fruit capsule; 50'x 40')  
**Dogwood, Kousa** - *Cornus kousa* (star-like creamy-white flowers; very attractive mottled bark; needs protection; 15'x 10')  
**Elm, 'Frontier'** - (lacebark hybrid) smaller, glossy leaves; lacy bark pattern; purple fall color; 40' x 30')  
**Elm, Lacebark** - *Ulmus parvifolia* (very heat and drought tolerant; nice "lacey" bark; rounded habit; some dieback in cold winters; 45'x 45')  
**Fringetree** - *Chionanthus virginicus* (large shrub or small tree; wispy, fragrant flowers; attractive blue fruit; 15'x 15')  
**Hemlock, Eastern** - *Tsuga Canadensis* (refined evergreen for protected spots; tolerates up to 1/2- 2/3 shade; 25'x 15')  
**Hickory, Mockernut** - *Carya tomentosa* (dark gray bark with furrowed, diamond pattern; nut meat is hard to extract; yellow fall color; 35'x 30')  
**Hornbeam, European** - *Carpinus betulus* (smooth gray bark; upright; tight, uniform branching; attractive leaf; 30'x 20')  
**Horsechestnut** - *Aesculus hippocastanum* (sticky, shiny winter buds; beautiful creamy flowers; prone to leaf diseases; 35'x 30')  
**Katsuratree** - *Cercidiphyllum japonicum* (beautiful multi-stemmed tree with handsome bark; heart-shaped leaves; 35' x 25')  
**Maple, Korean** - *Acer pseudosieboldianum* (hardier alternative to Japanese maple; patio size tree; red fall color; 20'x 15')  
**Oak, Bebb's** - *Quercus x bebbiana* (hybrid between bur oak and white oak; vigorous grower; very hardy; 50'x 50')  
**Oak, Chestnut** - *Quercus montana* (interesting chestnut-like leaf; prefers moist, fertile soils; avoid high pH soil; 50'x 35')  
**Oak, Pin** - *Quercus palustris* (upright habit; plant only on neutral or acidic soils - pH 7.2 or lower; 70'x 40')  
**Oak, Post** - *Quercus stellata* (tough, corky bark; medium rounded tree; ideal for hot, dry sites; native to southern KS; 30'x 25')  
**Parrotia** - *Parrotia persica* (lustrous green witchhazel like leaves turn yellow-orange in fall; exfoliating bark; needs protection; 20'x 15')  
**Pine, Lacebark** - *Pinus bungeana* (slow growing but graceful; beautiful mottled bark; unfortunately is prone to pine wilt disease; 45'x 20')  
**Sassafras** - *Sassafras albidum* (interesting mitten like leaves with orange fall color; spicy-aromatic branches; needs protection; 30'x 20')  
**Seven-Son Flower** - *Heptacodium miconoides* (gangly habit; nice summer flowers favored by bees; exfoliating bark; 15'x15')  
**Spruce, Oriental** - *Picea orientalis* (graceful habit; attractive pendulous branches similar to *P. omorika*; slow growing; 45'x 20')  
**Sugarberry** - *Celtis laevigata* (related to hackberry but with smooth bark; marginally hardy here; 50'x50')

## Trees No Longer Recommended Due to Invasiveness

- Corktree, Amur** - *Phellodendron amurense*  
**Goldenrain Tree** - *Koelreuteria paniculata*  
**Pear, Callery** - *Pyrus calleryana*  
**Tree of Heaven** - *Ailanthus altissima*  
**Russian Olive** - *Elaeagnus angustifolia*  
**White Mulberry** - *Morus alba*  
**Common Buckthorn** - *Rhamnus cathartica*  
**Saltcedar** - *Tamarix* spp. (declared noxious weed in Nebraska)  
**Siberian Elm** - *Ulmus pumila*

For more tree and plant resources, visit [plantnebraska.org](http://plantnebraska.org).