



# TREES TO REPLACE ASH

The following list is recommended for homeowners seeking replacement options for ash trees. Beware that no tree is a perfect replacement and some species have specific site limitations.

**Bur Oak** - and related species (*Quercus macrocarpa*): Bur oak is an outstanding, majestic native tree with amazing drought tolerance; great for wildlife; 50-70' x 50-75'. Related oaks include chinkapin oak (*Q. muehlenbergii*), swamp white oak (*Q. bicolor* - limit to eastern Nebraska) and Gambel oak (*Q. gambelii*), a species well-suited to western Nebraska.

**Red Oak** - and related species (*Quercus rubra*): Red oaks are less tolerant of high pH soils and are generally more suited to eastern Nebraska; closely related species include Shumard oak, black oak, Buckley oak, and shingle oak; most species tough and reliable with lustrous sharp-pointed leaves and beautiful fall color from russet to bright red in fall; 40-60' x 40-60'.

**American Linden** - and related species (*Tilia americana*): American linden is a tough and adaptable native with fragrant spring flowers favored by bees and other pollinators; 60' x 40'. Littleleaf linden (*Tilia cordata*) is similar but with a more formal, pyramidal shape. Silver linden (*Tilia tomentosa*) has very attractive dark-green leaves with pubescent (silvery) undersides that give them better resistance to Japanese beetles.

**Coffeetree** (*Gymnocladus dioica*): Native; amazingly adaptable; coarse outline with beautiful winter form; female trees have fairly large oblong seed pods containing the very hard "coffeetree" seeds; 50-60' x 40-50'.

**Sugar Maple and related species** (*Acer saccharum*): Sugar maple is a beautiful and underused tree with great fall color that grows well in eastern Nebraska; common cultivars include 'Fall Fiesta' and 'Legacy'; the Caddo ecotype from Oklahoma has exceptional heat and drought tolerance and includes the cultivars 'John Pair' and 'Autumn Splendor'; 40-60' x 35-50'. Bigtooth maple (*Acer grandidentatum*) is a related species native to Rocky Mountains that is better suited for western Nebraska.

**Pecan/Hickory** (*Carya spp.*): Pecan and bitternut hickory are the most adaptable hickories for eastern Nebraska and both deserve to be planted in greater abundance; relatively upright and fast growing; transplant when small; 50-70' x 40-60'.

**Hackberry** (*Celtis occidentalis*): Common native with legendary adaptability; irregular habit when young but matures to stately rounded crown; great street tree and good for a variety of wildlife including several butterfly species; 50-70' x 40-60'.

**Tulip Tree** (*Liriodendron tulipifera*): Surprisingly adaptable to protected sites in eastern Nebraska; prefers consistent moisture; tulip-like orange-yellow flowers in spring; distinctive leaves can turn butter yellow in fall; 50-70' x 35-50'.

**Northern Catalpa** (*Catalpa speciosa*): Midwest native; upright and irregular growth habit; large, heart-shaped leaves, showy flowers and long seed pods; very adaptable; 50-70' x 30-50'.

**Sycamore** (*Platanus occidentalis*): Sycamore is a terrific choice for the eastern half of Nebraska; tough and tall growing with beautiful mottled and creamy/white bark; good on wet sites; up to 80' x 50'. Sycamore's very similar hybrid cousin the London planetree (*Platanus x acerifolia*) is more commercially available and is anthracnose resistant, but not quite as hardy.

**Ohio Buckeye** (*Aesculus glabra*): Native, tough and adaptable; medium-sized tree with rounded form; butter-yellow flower spikes in spring; 'buckeye' seeds produced in leathery husks; good drought tolerance and good fall color in western Nebraska; 30' x 30'.

**Ginkgo** (*Ginkgo biloba*): An ancient species dating to the age of dinosaurs; distinctive fan-shaped leaves that turn golden-yellow in fall; upright branching habit; slow growing but tolerant of poor soils; 50' x 40'.

**Black Walnut** (*Juglans nigra*): This tough native can be a bit messy but is still a good tree for backyards and parks; incredible drought tolerance and good yellow fall color; don't plant near vegetable gardens; great for wildlife; good lumber tree; 60' x 45'.

**Honeylocust** (thornless) (*Gleditsia triacanthos var. inermis*): A very tough and adaptable tree that seems to thrive on neglect; graceful habit and feathery leaves that turn a rich golden yellow in the fall; choose seedless cultivars; 50-70' x 40-60'.

**American Elm** (*Ulmus americana*): Disease-resistant cultivars of American elm worth planting include 'Princeton' & 'Jefferson' as well local ecotypes selected by NSA. Such elms provide high-canopy, arching shade and grow 60-80' x 60-80'. Beware! American elms need careful structural pruning when young and should be limited primarily to street tree and park plantings.

**Other Elms** (*Ulmus spp.*): Several hybrid elms with proven drought tolerance and adaptability are now available including 'Triumph', 'Accolade', 'Frontier', and 'New Horizon'. Japanese elm (*Ulmus davidiana var. japonica*) including the 'Discovery' cultivar is an especially promising mid-sized tree. Beware! All elms require frequent structural pruning when young to maintain good form.



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**Ponderosa Pine** (*Pinus ponderosa*): Native to western Nebraska; tough and reliable with great drought tolerance; with age and size, becomes a useful shade tree as lower limbs shade out, leaving a relatively rounded canopy; 40-60' x 30-40'.

**Rocky Mountain Juniper** (*Juniperus scopulorum*): Western Nebraska relative of eastern red-cedar; amazingly drought tolerant; old trees become useful shade trees; great for wildlife; 30-50' x 20-30'.

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