

Trees

“Every leaf speaks bliss to me, fluttering from the Autumn tree...”
Emily Bronte 1818-1848

Like Emily Bronte we all look upwards in October with a renewed appreciation for our deciduous trees with their vibrant fall colors enveloping our surroundings. Trees, especially hardwood trees, are the backbones of our landscapes, providing the architecture and permanence every garden needs. What follows is a list of trees recommended for planting in Virginia. Many of these suggestions come from Donna Williamson’s book *The Virginia Gardener’s Companion* and the Virginia Cooperative Extension’s publication, *Problem-free Trees for Virginia Landscapes*.

Most of this list features large long-surviving hardwood trees that need to be planted at some distance from the house with plenty of room to grow. Remember when you plant a tree like this you are planting for the future!

willow oak (*Quercus phellos*)-great shade tree- tolerates wet and clay soil.

black gum or tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*)-prefers moist acidic soil – spectacular scarlet fall color.

red maple (*Acer Rubrum*)-tolerant of large range of soils – orange-red fall foliage color.

ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*)-purchase clone or cultivar not seedling to ensure getting male tree, bright yellow fall leaf foliage.

American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*)-grows best in rich well-drained soil, shallow rooted, so difficult to grow grass underneath its canopy.

tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)-better planted in spring, doesn’t thrive under dry soil conditions.

Princeton elm (*Ulmus americana* ‘Princeton’ is one cultivar)- excellent resistance to Dutch elm disease, attractive vase shaped growing habit.

American linden (*Tilia Americana*)- fragrant flowers in June, grows to large size.

Persian parrotia (*Parrotia persica*)-withstands drought, heat, and wind, attractive fall foliage yellow to orange to purple.

Japanese zelkova (*Zelkova serrate*)- Graceful shape, attractive bark, but early pruning important to prevent “V-branching” (branches growing into each other).

For more information on specific trees please see Missouri Botanical Garden Website plant finder section at: <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/plantfinder/plantfindersearch.aspx>