



WHITE OAK

Quercus alba

At a Glance

- **Tree Type:** Deciduous
- **Size at Maturity:** 60–80' tall × 60–80' wide
- **Canopy Style:** Broad, rounded, spreading
- **Sun Requirements:** Full sun
- **Water Needs:** Medium; prefers well-drained soils
- **Growth Rate:** Slow to moderate
- **Wildlife Attractant:** Yes—birds, mammals, insects
- **Native to NC:** Yes
- **Ideal Use:** Legacy, shade, habitat, large yards

FUN FACT

White oak wood was prized for shipbuilding—including the USS Constitution, “Old Ironsides”—thanks to its strength and resistance to rot.

Its durable lumber has also been essential for barrel-making, imparting distinctive flavor to bourbon and wines.

WHERE TO PLANT

White oaks need plenty of room to grow—best suited for large yards, parks, or open landscapes where their iconic, spreading limbs can fully develop without obstruction.

Prefers deep, well-drained soils. When planting, stay away from compacted or shallow ground. These long-lived giants thrive in locations with good air circulation and plenty of sunlight.

TREE CARE TIPS

- **Water routinely (1–2x/week) and deeply** during the first one to two years to encourage root growth.
- **Maintain a 2–3" layer of mulch** to stabilize soil temperature, conserve moisture, and reduce weeds. *Leave the trunk's root flare visible to avoid rot.*
- Avoid soil compaction or construction near roots.
- **Prune during winter dormancy** to remove dead, damaged, or crossing branches and maintain strong structure. *Avoid warm-season pruning, and never top.*

WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT

The white oak is a symbol of strength and endurance, living for centuries. Take one home and plant your legacy!



SHUMARD OAK

Quercus shumardii

At a Glance

- **Tree Type:** Deciduous
- **Size at Maturity:** 50–70' tall × 40–50' wide
- **Canopy Style:** Broad, spreading
- **Sun Requirements:** Full sun
- **Water Needs:** Medium; drought-tolerant once established
- **Growth Rate:** Moderate to fast
- **Wildlife Attractant:** Yes—birds, mammals
- **Native to NC:** Yes
- **Ideal Use:** Legacy, fast shade, large yards

TREE CARE TIPS

- **Water routinely (1-2x/week) and deeply** during the first 1–2 years to encourage root growth.
- **Maintain a 2–3" layer of mulch** to stabilize soil temperature, conserve moisture, and reduce weeds. *Leave the trunk's root flare visible!*
- Avoid soil compaction or construction near roots.
- **Prune during winter dormancy** to remove dead, damaged, or crossing branches and maintain structure. *Avoid warm-season pruning. Never top.*

FUN FACT

Often mistaken for red oak, Shumard is tougher in southern climates—an urban forestry favorite!

WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT

This oak combines resilience with beauty! **It thrives in urban soils and dazzles with crimson fall foliage—rare for oaks.**

ECOLOGICAL VALUE

Shumard oaks produce large acorns that are a staple food for woodpeckers and squirrels, especially in fall and winter when other resources are scarce. Their foliage supports hundreds of species of caterpillars, which in turn sustain birds and wildlife!

WHERE TO PLANT

Perfect for large yards! They thrive in open, sunny spaces where their broad crowns can fully develop without crowding nearby structures. *Avoid planting too close to homes, driveways, or narrow strips; give them the space they need to shine as a legacy shade tree!*

They're remarkably adaptable to clay soils and periodic drought once established.



OVERCUP OAK

Quercus lyrata

At a Glance

- **Tree Type:** Deciduous
- **Size at Maturity:** 45–70' tall × 35–50' wide
- **Canopy Style:** Rounded, uniform
- **Sun Requirements:** Full sun
- **Water Needs:** Medium to high; tolerates flooding
- **Growth Rate:** Moderate
- **Wildlife Attractant:** Yes—birds, mammals, insects
- **Native to NC:** Yes
- **Ideal Use:** Shade, floodplains, wet soils, wildlife

WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT

Adapted to floodplains, this oak can handle “wet feet,” making it ideal for soggy soils and low areas.

Its acorns are almost entirely enclosed by their cups—hence the name “overcup.”

FUN FACT

Because its acorns float, overcup oaks spread naturally via rivers and floodwaters!

TREE CARE TIPS

- **Water routinely (1-2x/week) and deeply** during the first one to two years to encourage strong root growth.
- **Maintain a 2-3" layer of mulch** to stabilize soil temperature, conserve moisture, and reduce weeds. *Leave the trunk's root flare visible to avoid rot.*
- Avoid soil compaction or construction near roots.
- **Prune during winter dormancy** to remove dead, damaged, or crossing branches and maintain strong structure. *Avoid warm-season pruning, and never top.*

ECOLOGICAL VALUE

Overcup oaks supports wetland wildlife with food and shelter. Strong roots reduce erosion and improve flood resilience, making it ideal for restoring lowland and riparian habitats. Beyond stabilizing soils, the tree's tolerance for prolonged flooding helps sustain wetland ecosystems.

WHERE TO PLANT

Ideal for low, flood-prone areas, stormwater basins, or sites near wetlands and streambanks. Well adapted to wet soils, the overcup oak thrives where many other trees won't, helping manage runoff and reduce erosion.

It prefers full sun but tolerates partial shade, and is a strong choice for both naturalized and urban landscapes—*just avoid drought-prone sites. that dry out quickly*



SWAMP WHITE OAK

Quercus bicolor

At a Glance

- **Tree Type:** Deciduous
- **Size at Maturity:** 50–60' tall × 50–60' wide
- **Canopy Style:** Rounded, open
- **Sun Requirements:** Full sun
- **Water Needs:** Medium to high; tolerates wet soils
- **Growth Rate:** Moderate
- **Wildlife Attractant:** Yes—birds, mammals
- **Native to NC:** Yes—wetland areas
- **Ideal Use:** Shade, moist soils, large yards

TREE CARE TIPS

- **Water routinely (1-2x/week) and deeply** during the first 1-2 years to encourage root growth.
- **Maintain a 2-3" layer of mulch** to stabilize soil temperature, conserve moisture, and reduce weeds. *Leave the trunk's root flare visible!*
- Avoid soil compaction or construction near roots.
- **Prune in winter dormancy** to remove dead, damaged, or crossing branches. *Never top!*

FUN FACT

Its acorns are “two-toned”—light cap and darker nut—earning the name “bicolor.”

WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT

This oak thrives where others falter—moist or swampy ground.

Its peeling bark adds character, and its yellow-gold fall foliage is a bonus.

ECOLOGICAL VALUE

What a powerhouse! The oak's acorns provide a reliable food source for squirrels and a wide range of birds, while its leaves host hundreds of caterpillar species that fuel the food web for songbirds.

Adapted to wetter soils, it thrives along floodplains and streambanks where it stabilizes soil, improves water quality, and mitigates flooding through stormwater absorption.

WHERE TO PLANT

Perfect for low-lying or flood-prone yards, swamp white oaks thrive in moist, poorly drained, or clay-heavy soils. *Avoid dry, exposed, or overly sandy sites.*



WILLOW OAK

Quercus phellos

At a Glance

- **Tree Type:** Deciduous
- **Size at Maturity:** 60–80' tall × 40–50' wide
- **Canopy Style:** Broad, rounded
- **Sun Requirements:** Full sun
- **Water Needs:** Medium; prefers moist, acidic soils
- **Growth Rate:** Fast
- **Wildlife Attractant:** Yes—birds, mammals
- **Native to NC:** Yes
- **Ideal Use:** Fast shade, big yards, street tree

WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT

Beloved in southern cities, willow oaks combine elegance with toughness.

Their narrow, willow-like leaves give a graceful texture, while the tree grows quickly into a broad, cooling canopy.

ECOLOGICAL VALUE

The willow oak's acorns support dozens of bird and mammal species—an especially important food source because their smaller size makes them accessible to a wider range of species.

WHERE TO PLANT

This oak needs room to spread—great for big lawns!

Avoid tight residential spots where roots could crowd infrastructure or sidewalks, as mature trees require ample underground space for their extensive root systems.

TREE CARE TIPS

- **Water routinely (1-2x/week) and deeply** during the first 1-2 years to encourage root growth.
- **Maintain a 2-3" layer of mulch** to stabilize soil temperature, conserve moisture, and reduce weeds. *Leave the trunk's root flare visible to avoid rot!*
- Avoid soil compaction or construction near roots.
- **Prune during winter dormancy** to remove dead, damaged, or crossing branches and maintain structure. *Avoid warm-season pruning. Never top!*

FUN FACT

Squirrels love willow oaks! Don't be surprised if you see a few scurrying around when acorns drop.



DURA HEAT® RIVER BIRCH *Betula nigra*

At a Glance

- **Tree Type:** Deciduous
- **Size at Maturity:** 30–40' tall × 25–35' wide
- **Canopy Style:** Oval, spreading
- **Sun Requirements:** Full sun to part shade
- **Water Needs:** Medium to high; tolerates wet soils
- **Growth Rate:** Fast
- **Wildlife Attractant:** Yes—birds, pollinators
- **Native to NC:** Yes
- **Ideal Use:** Rain gardens, stream banks, wet yards

TREE CARE TIPS

- **Water routinely (1-2x/week) and deeply** during the first 1-2 years to encourage root growth.
- **Maintain a 2-3" layer of mulch** to stabilize soil temperature, conserve moisture, and reduce weeds. *Leave the trunk's root flare visible to avoid rot!*
- Avoid soil compaction or construction near roots.
- **Prune during winter dormancy** to remove dead, damaged, or crossing branches and maintain structure. *Avoid warm-season pruning. Never top!*

WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT

With cinnamon-peeling bark and golden fall color, this beauty looks good year-round!

Unlike other birches, this cultivar resists heat stress and holds its leaves longer in southern summers.

WHERE TO PLANT

The Dura Heat® river birch is a native standout, tailor-made for soggy spots and sultry summers.

It thrives in low-lying, damp soils, soaking up stormwater and anchoring rain gardens, streambanks, and wet backyards.

River birch roots are vigorous! Avoid planting too close to sidewalks, driveways, or foundations, where root heaving could be a concern.

ECOLOGICAL VALUE

Seeds feed finches and other small birds. The foliage supports butterfly and moth caterpillars. Its roots stabilize streambanks, filtering runoff and reducing erosion.

FUN FACT

River birch bark was once used by Native Americans for canoes and shelters.



BLACKGUM / TUPELO

Nyssa sylvatica

At a Glance

- **Tree Type:** Deciduous
- **Size at Maturity:** 30–50' tall × 20–30' wide
- **Canopy Style:** Pyramidal when young, rounded with age
- **Sun Requirements:** Full sun to part shade
- **Water Needs:** Medium; tolerates wet or dry sites once established
- **Growth Rate:** Slow to moderate
- **Wildlife Attractant:** Yes—bees, birds, mammals
- **Native to NC:** Yes
- **Ideal Use:** Shade, fall color, wildlife habitat

WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT

A Carolina classic, blackgum trees ignite in autumn with brilliant scarlet foliage—**one of the earliest and brightest fall shows in the Southeast!**

FUN FACT

The name “tupelo” comes from the Muscogee (Creek) language, meaning “tree of the swamp.”

Its nectar produces a prized honey—Tupelo honey.

TREE CARE TIPS

- **Water routinely (1-2x/week) and deeply** during the first 1-2 years to encourage root growth.
- **Maintain a 2-3" layer of mulch** to stabilize soil temperature, conserve moisture, and reduce weeds. Leave the trunk's root flare visible to avoid rot!
- Avoid soil compaction or construction near roots.
- **Relatively low-maintenance**, blackgum trees require little pruning—just remove any dead, damaged, or crowded branches in late winter if needed.

WHERE TO PLANT

Prefers moist, acidic soil but tolerates a range of conditions. Its deep taproot makes it wind-firm but hard to transplant—plant small and let it grow. Choose a site with full sun to partial shade and give it space to develop its naturally upright, pyramidal shape.

ECOLOGICAL VALUE

Early fall berries are a high-energy feast for birds and mammals—including wood ducks, robins, wild turkeys, and black bears.

Spring flowers attract native pollinators, while dense foliage offers nesting cover for songbirds.

In wetland or low-lying areas, deep roots help stabilize soil and reduce erosion.



PRINCETON AMERICAN ELM

Ulmus americana 'Princeton'

At a Glance

- **Tree Type:** Deciduous
- **Size at Maturity:** 60–80' tall × 30–50' wide
- **Canopy Style:** Vase-shaped, arching
- **Sun Requirements:** Full sun
- **Water Needs:** Medium
- **Growth Rate:** Fast
- **Wildlife Attractant:** Yes—birds, pollinators, mammals
- **Native to NC:** Yes—disease-resistant cultivar of native elm
- **Ideal Use:** Fast shade, urban areas

TREE CARE TIPS

- **Water routinely (1-2x/week) and deeply** during the first 1-2 years to encourage root growth.
- **Maintain a 2-3" layer of mulch** to stabilize soil temperature, conserve moisture, and reduce weeds. *Leave the trunk's root flare visible!*
- Avoid soil compaction or construction near roots.
- **Prune during winter dormancy** to remove dead, damaged, or crossing branches and maintain structure. Avoid warm-season pruning. *Never top!*

FUN FACT

Once America's most popular street tree, the elm lined entire avenues with its graceful canopy.

WHERE TO PLANT

Ideal for large yards, this elm needs ample space to reach its full potential—maturing at 60–80' tall with an equally impressive canopy spread.

WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT

Developed in 1922, the 'Princeton' cultivar is prized for its resistance to Dutch elm disease, helping to restore this iconic tree to our landscapes. Fast-growing and adaptable, it tolerates a wide range of urban conditions, from compacted soils to air pollution, while still displaying its iconic form.

Its tall, arching limbs makes every street look like a cathedral and every yard feel like a park.

ECOLOGICAL VALUE

Hosts the caterpillars, supporting butterfly and insect populations at the base of the food web. Its seeds and foliage feed countless birds and small mammals.



FRINGE TREE

Chionanthus virginicus

At a Glance

- **Tree Type:** Deciduous
- **Size at Maturity:** 12–20' tall × 12–20' wide
- **Canopy Style:** Rounded, spreading
- **Sun Requirements:** Full sun to part shade
- **Water Needs:** Medium; prefers moist, well-drained soils
- **Growth Rate:** Slow to moderate
- **Wildlife Attractant:** Yes—pollinators, birds
- **Native to NC:** Yes
- **Ideal Use:** Accent tree, small yards, understory, spring blooms

TREE CARE TIPS

- **Water routinely (1–2x/week) and deeply** during the first 1–2 years to establish strong roots, especially during dry spells.
- **Maintain a 2–3" layer of mulch** to stabilize soil temperature, conserve moisture, and reduce weeds. *Keep mulch away from the trunk, and leave the root flare visible to avoid rot!*
- Minimal pruning needed.

WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT

With **billowy white blossoms** that look like delicate fringe or “old man’s beard,” this native tree is a springtime spectacle. Its fragrant, showy spring blooms support pollinators such as bees and butterflies.

FUN FACT

The fringe tree is dioecious—male and female flowers grow on separate trees. In fall, female trees produce clusters of dark blue, olive-like fruit loved by birds and wildlife!

ECOLOGICAL VALUE

Beyond its blooms and fruits, this tree also offers cover and nesting habitat within its dense branching structure, making it an excellent choice for enhancing biodiversity in both urban and natural landscapes.

WHERE TO PLANT

Fringe trees thrive in filtered light, especially near moist, well-drained soils.

Avoid exposed, dry locations—these trees do best with some natural shelter. They can tolerate full sun, but will require consistent watering during establishment, especially in hot, dry sites.

Fringe trees also tolerate clay soils more successfully than many other ornamentals!



AUTUMN BRILLIANCE SERVICEBERRY

Amelanchier × grandiflora

At a Glance

- **Tree Type:** Deciduous
- **Size at Maturity:** 15–25' tall × 15–20' wide
- **Canopy Style:** Upright, rounded, multi-stem or single trunk
- **Sun Requirements:** Full sun to part shade
- **Water Needs:** Medium; tolerates most soils with good drainage
- **Growth Rate:** Moderate
- **Wildlife Attractant:** Yes—pollinators, birds, and small mammals
- **Native to NC:** Yes—serviceberry hybrid
- **Ideal Use:** Edible berries, four-season interest, small yards, pollinator gardens

WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT

A true four-season showstopper: clouds of white flowers in spring, tasty red-purple berries in summer, fiery orange-red foliage in fall, and silvery bark in winter.

ECOLOGICAL VALUE

Beloved by pollinators in spring, then feeds cedar waxwings, robins, and mockingbirds in summer. Provides shade and stormwater interception despite its smaller size.

TREE CARE TIPS

- **Water routinely (1-2x/week) and deeply** during the first 1-2 years—especially during dry spells—to encourage root growth.
- **Maintain a 2-3" layer of mulch** to stabilize soil temperature, conserve moisture, and reduce weeds. *Leave the trunk's root flare visible!*
- **Avoid soil compaction** or construction near roots.
- If shaping is desired, **prune lightly after flowering.**

FUN FACT

Those summer berries aren't just for the birds—they're edible for people too! Early settlers baked them into jams and pies.

WHERE TO PLANT

Great for smaller spaces, under power lines, or as a focal point near garden beds. Avoid consistently soggy or poorly drained sites, which can lead to root stress.

Note: This tree produces berries that attract birds and can create a bit of a mess—so it's best to avoid planting over hard surfaces like driveways, patios, or sidewalks.



CLARYNETTE® AMERICAN HORNBEAM

*Carpinus
caroliniana*

At a Glance

- **Tree Type:** Deciduous
- **Size at Maturity:** 20–30' tall × 20–30' wide
- **Canopy Style:** Rounded, dense
- **Sun Requirements:** Partial sun to full shade
- **Water Needs:** Medium; thrives in moist soils
- **Growth Rate:** Slow to moderate
- **Wildlife Attractant:** Yes—birds, pollinators, mammals
- **Native to NC:** Yes
- **Ideal Use:** Shade tree for small yards, narrow spaces, screening, naturalistic plantings, urban sites

WHY YOU'LL LOVE IT

This tree is graceful yet tough! Fall color ranges from yellow to orange to red.

This cultivar is prized for its uniform form.

FUN FACT

Known as “ironwood” or “musclewood” for its strong, sinewy trunk.

TREE CARE TIPS

- Keep soil consistently moist, especially when young (1–2 years); Water deeply once a week during dry spells to help young roots establish.
- Minimal pruning required.
- Mulch generously to mimic forest-floor conditions. Keep mulch a few inches away from the trunk to prevent rot and allow for air circulation.

WHERE TO PLANT

Thrives in low, moist sites like streambanks but also adapts well to urban settings with adequate shade. Requires full shade to partial sun—it is not ideal for full sun in southeastern NC's hot climate and sandy soils. If planted in a more open location, ensure it receives afternoon shade and regular moisture to prevent stress.

Early Americans used its extremely hard wood for tool handles and bowls.

ECOLOGICAL VALUE

Seeds feed songbirds and small mammals, while dense foliage provides nesting habitat.

Supports the caterpillars of several native butterfly and moth species, playing a key role in the food web for birds and beneficial insects.