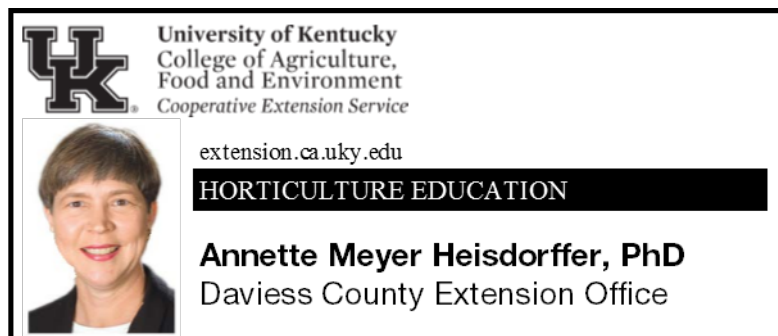


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A Variety of Trees for the Landscape
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Sweaters, football, and pumpkins remind us of fall. Add thoughts of planting trees to that list because fall is the best time to plant most trees, which allows time for root growth before spring. Before selecting a tree, determine what is already growing in the area. Remember, the more trees related from the same family, the more likely they may be attacked by insect pests or diseases.

Dr. William Fountain, retired Extension Professor, UK Department of Horticulture, suggests planting trees with minimal insect and disease problems that are not considered invasive. He also recommends selecting the best plant for the site, using a diversity of species, and installing healthy plants.

A native tree to consider for the landscape is American hornbeam or musclewood (*Carpinus caroliniana*). It has interesting, smooth, gray bark that looks like flexed muscles. This slow growing, medium-sized tree reaches 20 to 30 feet tall and wide. It can be found as a large shrub if not trained in the nursery to be a single-trunk tree. Fall color varies from yellow to

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orange. It can tolerate wet sites but also grows in drier locations. Musclewood tolerates some shade.

Amur maackia (*Maackia amurensis*) is a medium-sized tree reaching 20 to 30 feet tall and wide. The bark becomes attractive with maturity as it peels. The dull white flowers are produced on 4- to 6-inch upright racemes in June and July. The 2- to 3-inch-long fruit are brown. The fall color is dull. It requires well-drained soil in a sunny location. In addition, this tree is drought tolerant, especially once established.

Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) is a beautiful native, spring flowering tree. The half-inch-long, reddish-purple flowers are produced on the branches before the leaves appear. Flowers are often found on the trunk, too. Attractive, brown, flat seed pods often stay on the tree until the following spring. The leaves turn yellow-green to yellow in the fall. The tree reaches 20 to 30 feet in height with a spread of 25 to 35 feet. Redbud grows in sun or shade and is best used as an understory tree. Soil should be well-drained. Redbud is bee friendly.

Another native tree is the sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*). It can reach a height of 25 to 30 feet tall with a spread of 20 feet. The small, white flowers open in June and look like upside-down urns. These fragrant flowers hang from 8 to 10 inches long with slightly drooping stems. They persist as clusters of small, brown fruit until late winter. The foliage is shiny green all summer. Sourwood is considered to be one of the best trees with red fall color among the native trees. The bark is grayish brown to brown in color. This is a good tree for well-drained, slightly acidic soil.

Carolina silverbell, (*Halesia carolina*), grows 30 to 40 feet tall and spreads 20 to 35 feet.

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Translucent white, one-inch flowers hang from the branches in May. An interesting, star-shaped, papery fruit is produced. As the tree ages, the bark becomes more attractive with gray to brown to black color combinations. It prefers to grow in well-drained, good soil and in partial shade in Kentucky.

A large tree for a spacious landscape is baldcypress (*Taxodium distichum*), which grows in wet and well-drained soil. The tree reaches 70 feet in height and 20 to 30 feet wide, forming a columnar shape. It can be grown with low-hanging branches. The soft, feathery foliage turns brownish orange before dropping in the fall.

An early-blooming tree is the Cornelian cherry dogwood (*Cornus mas*). It is a broad tree that reaches 15 to 25 feet tall with a spread of 15 to 20 feet. In March, small .75 inch, yellow flowers cover the tree. Bright red fruits are produced in summer. The grayish brown bark exfoliates on older branches. It prefers to grow in well-drained soil and can grow in partial shade to full sun.

A disease and insect-free tree is ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*), which tolerates urban conditions. The key is to make sure to purchase a male cultivar. The fruits on the female tree have an offensive odor. It can take 8 to 20 years for the female tree to flower, so don't take a chance with an ungrafted seedling. Ginkgo is a large tree reaching 50 feet tall with a 30 to 40 foot spread over time. The rigid, upright branches give it a distinctive characteristic. The fan-shaped leaves turn a brilliant yellow in the fall. A unique characteristic is that most of the leaves fall off the tree within 24 to 48 hours in autumn. It prefers to grow in well-drained soil and full sun.

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Trees to use with caution, according to Dr. Fountain, include red maple (*Acer rubrum*), willow oak (*Quercus phellos*), river birch (*Betula nigra*), and flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*). These are already plentiful in the environment, and some have pest issues.

For more information about trees for the landscape, contact the Daviess County Cooperative Extension Service at 270-685-8480 or annette.heisdorffer@uky.edu.

Annette's Tips:

The publications by Dr. William Fountain, which contain important notes to consider when selecting trees, titled "Trees with Minimal Insect and Disease Problems for Kentucky Landscapes," HO-94, and "After Your Ash Has Died", ID 241 are available at the Daviess County Cooperative Extension Service office or at <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/ho/ho94/ho94.pdf> and <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/ID/ID241/ID241.pdf>. Tables of problematic and overplanted tree species are included. To find the suggested trees, contact local nurseries, garden centers, and landscape architects.

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