
Landscape Trees in Western Virginia



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Helping you make big decisions

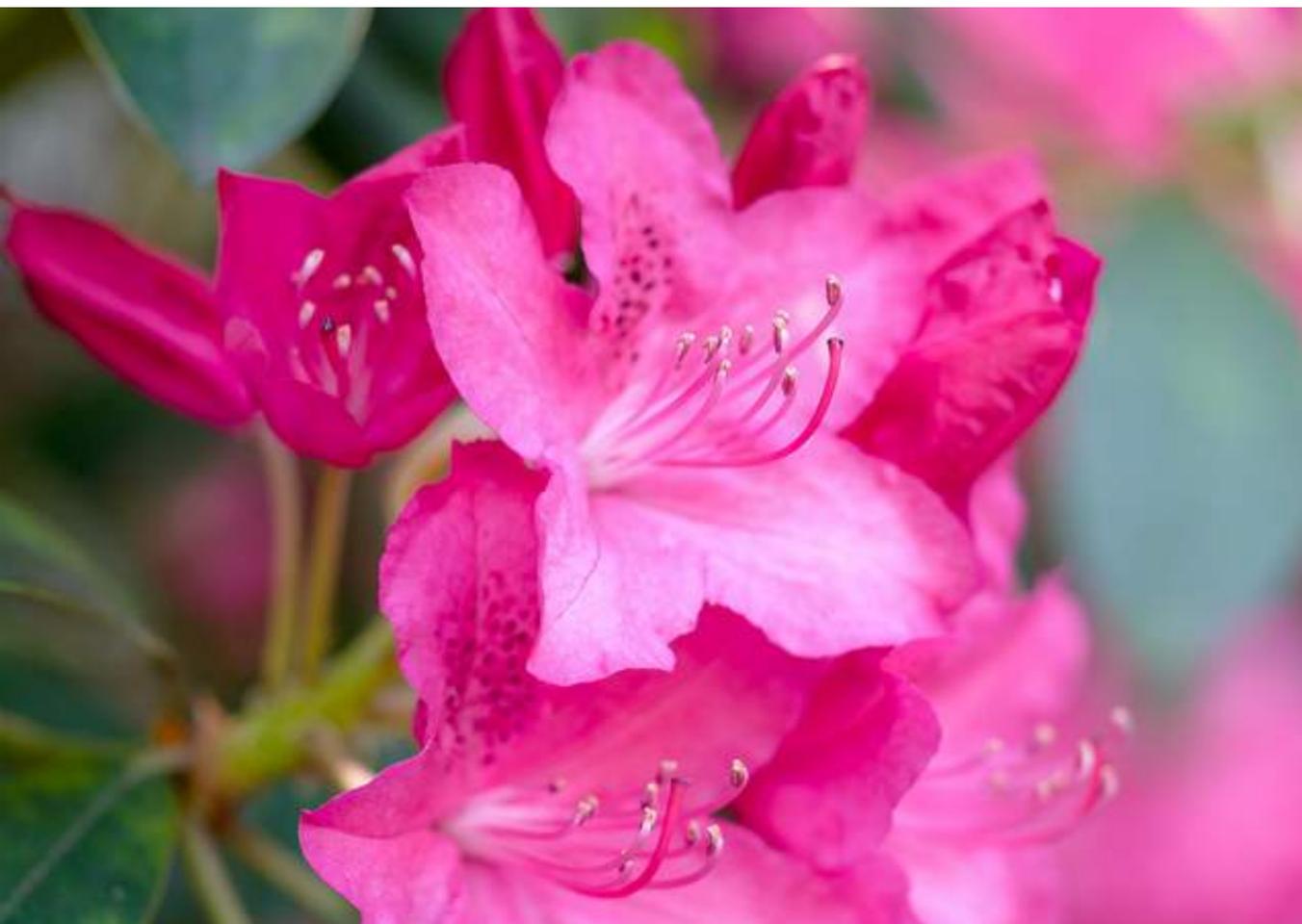
Whether you're planning an entirely new landscape or just looking to fill one spot in your yard, choosing the right tree - or trees - to plant is a big decision with a significant price tag. When selecting trees for your property, you can narrow down options by considering the qualities you want to enjoy in your trees.

- Are you looking for shade in the summer or a windbreak in the winter?
- Is privacy a consideration?
- Are you concerned more with the beauty of ornamentals, or the function of fruit trees or hedges?
- Do you want an evergreen to provide color year-round, or a deciduous tree to let solar heat through in the winter?
- What is your budget?
- What kind of long-term care and maintenance are you able to provide (pruning, leaf removal, fertilizing, etc.)?

Figure out what your goals are, then make a list of the species that best fit your needs.



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"Rhododendron (detail)" by James Petts is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0



"Ginkgo leaves" by wplynn is licensed under CC BY_ND 2.0



Informing your conversations

Certain trees just perform better than others under the growing conditions in western Virginia. Some trees will give beautiful blooms, gorgeous foliage, and cool shade year after year. Others are guaranteed to give you one problem after another.

At Valley Tree, we want to arm you with the right amount of information to help you make wise decisions about your landscaping investments. That's why we've put together this ebook of ten of our favorite landscaping trees in Virginia. Included are Sweetgum, Beech, Crape Myrtle, Redbud, Arborvitae, Japanese Maple, Kousa Dogwood, Magnolia, Oak, and Red Maple. While this list is by no means comprehensive with regard to species or characteristics, it will help you get started on your way to finding the right trees for your landscape. Who knows? Maybe some of our favorites will become your favorites, too!

With this information in hand, you can have a more informed conversation with your landscape or tree professional about which trees are right for you and your property.

American Sweetgum

Liquidambar styraciflua

With its pyramidal form, star-shaped leaves, dramatic fall colors, and spiky ball-shaped fruits, the American Sweetgum adds vibrant personality to its surroundings. A native to the southeast United States, the Sweetgum's seeds and fruits provide food for a variety of birds and small wild mammals.

Vital Statistics

- Tree type: Deciduous shade tree.
- Size at maturity: 60-75' tall, 40-50' spread.
- Growth rate: Medium to fast.
- Site preferences: Will grow in a wide range of soils. Prefers full sun.

Learn more

<https://www.arborday.org/trees/treeguide/TreeDetail.cfm?itemID=928>



"sweetgum" by karen_hine is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0





Beech

Fagus grandifolia (American Beech)

Fagus sylvatica (European Beech)

Loved for its rich fall colors, smooth gray bark, and wide-spreading canopy, the slow-growing and long-living beech tree is at home in both residential and commercial landscapes. Its nuts provide an important food source for birds and wild mammals.

Vital Statistics

- Tree type: Deciduous shade tree.
- Size at maturity: 50-70' tall, 40' spread.
- Growth rate: Slow to medium.
- Site preferences: Full sun. Tolerates a wide range of soil textures, but prefers well-drained, moist soils.
- Each species of beech is susceptible to different pests and diseases. Consult with a trusted landscape or tree care professional about which species is right for your landscape.
- May be slightly more resistant to browsing by deer than other arborvitae varieties. If deer browsing becomes a problem, consider spruce as an alternative.

Learn more

<https://shop.arborday.org/product.aspx?zpid=789>

Crape (Crepe) Myrtle

Lagerstroemia spp.

A favorite in many southern landscapes, the crape myrtle produces panicles of crinkled flowers with a crepe-like texture. Depending on the species and variety, the tree may exhibit white, purple, or some shade of red blooms. The crape myrtle is one of the only trees that blooms during the hottest months of the year, making it a refreshing sight during the “dog days” of summer. Also depending on the species, the bark exfoliate or appear smooth, adding additional interest to the landscape in the winter months after the tree’s leaves have dropped. The crape myrtle’s resistance to damage by deer browsing also contributes to its popularity.

Vital Statistics

- Tree type: Deciduous ornamental.
- Size at maturity: Varies based on species and variety. Mature height ranges from 8’ to 30’ and spread ranges from 6’ to 15’.
- Growth rate: Moderate to fast.
- Site preferences: Full sun and moist, well-drained soil.

Learn more

<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/all/lagerstroemia-indica/>





Eastern Redbud

Cercis canadensis

Along with the Downy Serviceberry and Saucer Magnolia, the Eastern Redbud is one of the earliest bloomers of spring in western Virginia. Displaying spectacular pink blossoms; rich green, heart-shaped leaves; distinctive bean-like seed pods; and a unique, irregular branching pattern, the Eastern Redbud adds delight to residential and commercial landscapes year-round.

Vital Statistics

- Tree type: Deciduous ornamental.
- Size at maturity: 20-30' tall, 25-35' spread.
- Growth rate: Medium.
- Site preferences: Full sun to partial shade. Tolerates a range of soil textures, but prefers moist, well-drained soils.

Learn more

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cercis_canadensis

Green Giant

Arborvitae

Thuja standishii x plicata 'Green Giant'

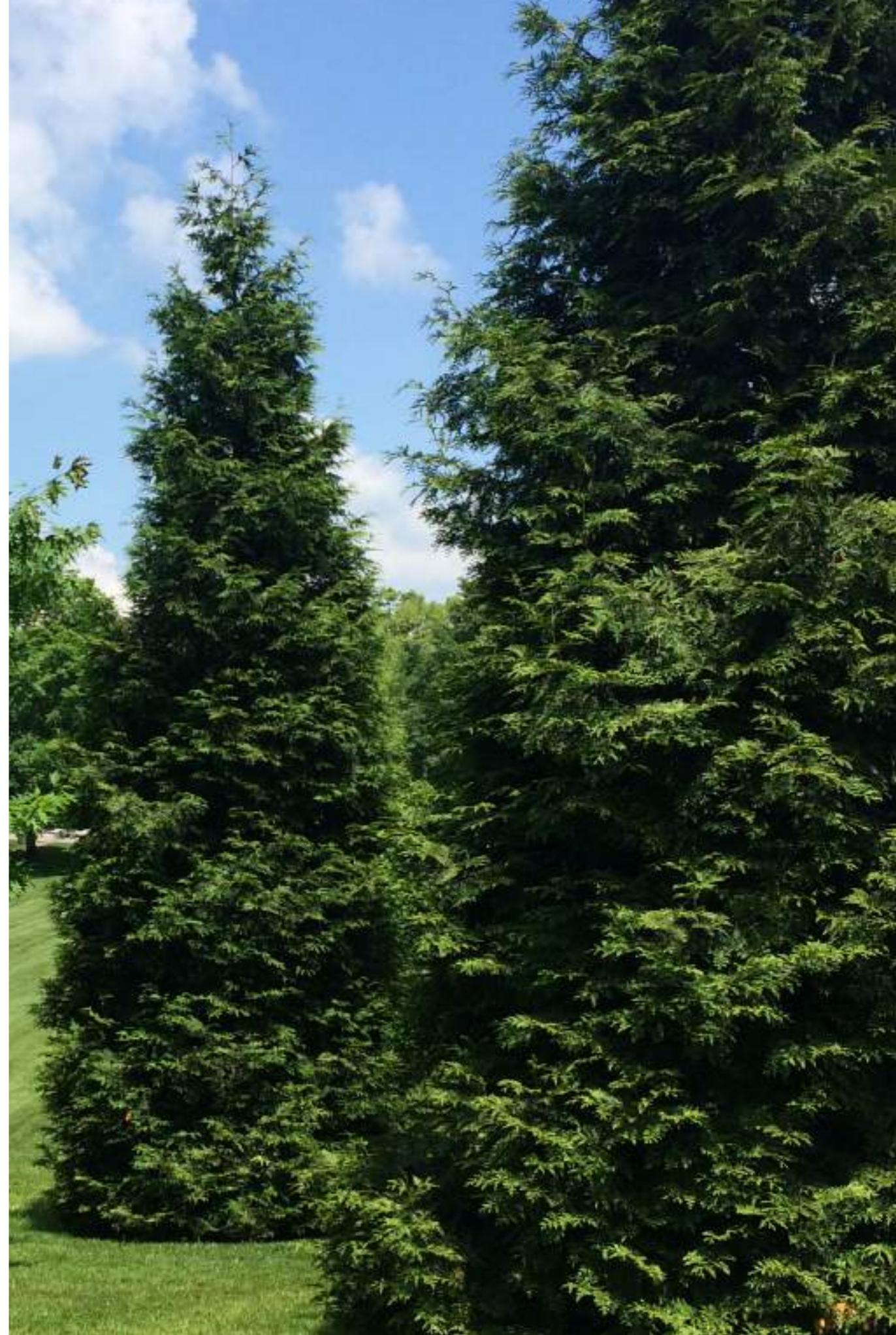
Boasting rich green foliage shaped like a pyramid or cone, the Green Giant Arborvitae serves as an excellent hedge when planted in rows or as an attractive single specimen in the landscape. Shooting up as much as three feet per year until it reaches maturity, this large, vigorous evergreen makes a good choice for a natural windbreak.

Vital Statistics

- Tree type: Evergreen (keeps its foliage year-round).
- Size at maturity: 50-60' tall, 12-20' spread.
- Growth rate: 24" or more per year until maturity.
- Site preferences: Full sun to partial shade. Tolerates a wide range of soil textures, but avoid poorly drained, wet, or salty sites.
- No serious disease or pest problems, but watch out for bagworms or scale.
- May be slightly more resistant to browsing by deer than other arborvitae varieties. If deer browsing becomes a problem, consider spruce as an alternative.

Learn more

<https://www.arborday.org/trees/treeguide/treedetail.cfm?itemID=779>



Japanese Maple

Acer palmatum, *Acer dissectum*

Named “palmatum” after its five-fingered leaves, this species of Japanese maple has become a popular focal point for many American yards. The graceful, vibrantly colored leaves add rich contrast and interest to residential and commercial landscapes

Vital Statistics

- Tree type: Deciduous ornamental.
- Size at maturity: Varies based on species and variety. The *Acer palmatum* tops out at 8-10’ tall and 10’ wide, while the Southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) can grow up to 60-80’ tall and 40’ wide.
- Growth rate: Varies based on species and variety, but generally slow to medium.
- Site preferences: Full sun to partial shade, depending on species. Likes well-drained soils.

Learn more

<https://shop.arborday.org/product.aspx?zpid=866>



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"Acer Palmatum 'Bloodgood'" by jd_09 is licensed under CC BY 2.0



Kousa Dogwood

Cornus kousa

Hailed as Virginia's official state tree, the dogwood sports elegant flowers, beautiful berries, and an attractive branching pattern. While some native species, such as *Cornus florida*, are susceptible to certain diseases like the anthracnose fungus, the hardy Kousa dogwood shows more resistance to pests and disease. An excellent choice for home landscapes, the Kousa produces large, white modified leaves called "bracts" that are mistaken for flowers, but which actually frame small, greenish-yellow flowers at their centers.

Vital Statistics

- Tree type: Deciduous. Considered to be both flowering and ornamental, as its elegant form and flower-like bracts provide visual interest across multiple seasons.
- Size at maturity: 15-25' tall, 25' spread.
- Growth rate: Slow to medium; 12-24" per year.
- Site preferences: Full sun to partial shade. Tolerates a variety of soil textures from loamy to sandy to clay, as long as they are moist and well-drained.
- Shape: Rounded.
- Colorful! Produces white flower-like bracts in the spring; pinkish red to red berries that attract songbirds; and dark green leaves that turn purple and scarlet in the fall.

Learn more

<https://www.arborday.org/trees/treeguide/TreeDetail.cfm?ItemID=830>



"Kousa dogwood" by Alexis is licensed under CC by SA-2.0

Kousa dogwood in bloom.

Magnolia

Magnolia spp.

Pictured here, the show-stopping Saucer magnolia ushers in spring with large pink blossoms, then displays a canopy of dark green, leathery leaves. Few trees catch the eye like a Saucer magnolia in full bloom...unless it's a Southern magnolia or a Sweetbay magnolia. With over a hundred varieties of magnolia to choose from, it's hard to go wrong with this genus of trees.

Vital Statistics

- Tree type: Varies. Some species, like the Southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) are evergreen, while others are deciduous. Considered to be both flowering and ornamental, it is planted for its visual interest and profusion of spring flowers.
- Size at maturity: Varies based on species and variety. The Ann magnolia (*Magnolia liliflora* 'Nigra') tops out at 8-10' tall and 10' wide, while the Southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) can grow up to 60-80' tall and 40' wide.
- Growth rate: Varies based on species and variety, but generally slow to medium.
- Site preferences: Full sun to partial shade, depending on species. Likes well-drained soils.

Learn more

<https://www.arborday.org/trees/treeguide/TreeList.cfm>
(search "Magnolia")



"Southern Magnolia - Seedpods" by David Ohmer is licensed under CC BY 2.0



"Magnolia 'Ann'" by F. D. Richards is licensed under CC BY 2.0



Oak

Quercus spp.

With hundreds of species and varieties to choose from, it's hard to go wrong with a mighty oak in your landscape. Named America's National Tree in 2004, the hardy oak can live well over 200 years - all the while providing shade, beauty, and food for wildlife. Some species display dramatic fall colors as well.

Vital Statistics

- Tree type: Deciduous shade tree.
- Size at maturity: Varies based on species and variety. The Pin Oak (*Q. palustris*) and Northern Red Oak (*Q. rubra*) grow to be 60-70' tall with a 25-40' spread while the White Oak (*Q. alba*) can grow up to 80' tall and 80' wide.
- Growth rate: Varies based on species.
- Site preferences: Oaks can tolerate a variety of soils and general prefers full-sun conditions.

Learn more

<https://shop.arborday.org/content.aspx?page=tree-oak>



"Pin Oak Tree" by F. D. Richards is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0



"oak leaves in rain" by Trisha is licensed under CC BY-ND 2.0



"Gray Squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*" by pete beard is licensed under CC BY 2.0



Red Maple

Acer rubrum

With red fruits in spring, red leaf stalks in summer, bright red foliage in autumn, and red leaf buds in winter, the Red Maple gets its name from its year-round display of color. Its distinctive winged "helicopter" fruits provide food for squirrels and other small mammals.

Vital Statistics

- Tree type: Deciduous ornamental.
- Size at maturity: 40-60' tall, 40' spread.
- Growth rate: Medium to fast; 13-24" per year until maturity.
- Site preferences: Full sun. Tolerates a variety of soils textures. Prefers moist soil, but exhibits slight drought tolerance.

Learn more

<https://www.arborday.org/trees/treeguide/TreeDetail.cfm?itemID=867>