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Some trees not to plant

Sept. 1975 *Changing Times*

Knowing what not to plant is important, too. Through the years certain trees have been found to be undesirable as shade trees because of structural problems, insect infestation and/or disease susceptibility. The list below, from continuing, comprehensive Shade Tree Evaluation Studies at the Ohio State Agricultural Research and Development Center in Wooster, notes the drawbacks of some shade trees. When new, improved selections of these trees are developed, they may be acceptable for future plantings.

Box elder (*Acer negundo*): Very weak wood. Many serious insect problems.

Silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*): Weak wood and poor branch structure that can result in breakage.

Ohio buckeye (*Aesculus glabra*): Messy fruit, weak wood, subject to early leaf drop and leaf scorch.

Horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*): Weak wood, messy fruit, doesn't do well in dry soils so it often gets leaf scorch.

Tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*): Branches may break during ice and wind storms. Attacked by insects.

Birch: paper, grey, European (*Betula papyrifera*, *B. populifolia*, *B. alba*): Generally short-lived because of birch borers and leaf miner injuries.

Catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa*): Objectional fruit, weak wood.

Paul's scarlet hawthorn (*Crataegus oxyacantha*, "Pauli"): Serious leaf spot causes early defoliation. Attacked by several insects.

Black walnut (*Juglans nigra*): Fruit causes a maintenance problem.

Crab apples (*Malus* species): Susceptible to fire-blight and apple scab. Plant only crab apples resistant to diseases.

Mulberry (*Morus* species): Fruits generally messy, subject to wind and ice damage. Excessive twig and leaf drop. Insect and disease problems. Roots frequently clog sewers.

Black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*): Serious infestations by locust borer and locust leaf miner shorten the life span.

Willow (*Salix* species): Extensive twig drop; susceptible to wind damage. Shallow root systems clog drains.

American elm (*Ulmus americana*): Subject to Dutch elm and other diseases.

Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila*): Limbs and twigs break during wind and ice storms.

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