

Trees to Avoid Planting
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There are a number of trees you should avoid planting because they will grow too large for the space at hand, are messy or are too thirsty. Consider your climate, soil, space, sunlight, and available irrigation water when deciding whether and where to plant a tree. A tree can be a lovely and important addition to a yard, however, be aware of any drawbacks with the selected tree species before you plant. The trees described below are ones that may be found for sale in this area, but may not be ones you want to add to your landscape.

Some species of the Eucalyptus, also known as Gum trees, might be less desirable than others. The Blue Gum Eucalyptus, *Eucalyptus globulus*, is categorized as an invasive plant. Although some Eucalyptus trees can grow very quickly and quite tall, they are also known to be thirsty plants. Eucalyptus trees become stressed when they are not adequately watered. Stress leads to attack by pests like the Long-horned, Tortoise and Leaf-eating beetles and some Psyllids – like the Redgum Lerp Psyllid.

If you are thinking of planting the beautiful *Robinia pseudoacacia*, or Black Locust, you might want to reconsider the choice of this tree for several reasons. Although this species can tolerate poor soil and little or no water, its roots are very aggressive and spread by suckers, which can pop up all over the garden. Additionally, the bark, leaves and seeds are poisonous if ingested.

The Cottonwood, Aspen and Poplar are all in the *Populus* genus. These trees have aggressive surface roots that crowd out other plants and can damage sewer lines and pop up sidewalks and driveways. Roots sucker if they are cut or damaged. Cottonwoods also produce a gum-like sap which can be messy.

Betula pendula, European White Birch, is the white trunk tree with interesting bark so commonly seen. This tree is a greedy consumer of water. Birch trees are susceptible to aphids that drip honeydew, making a mess. They also bleed sap when pruned. The Birch Borer attacks certain species of Birches leaving holes in the trunk and branches and causing leaves and branches to wilt and ooze.

Unless you are planting next to a pond, the *Salix*, Willow, is one to avoid. This tree has shallow and invasive roots. It is also short-lived and its wood is brittle and weak. Because of its very low canopy and shallow root system, it is difficult to grow anything under it. Most species are susceptible to tent caterpillars, aphids, borers and spider mites.

Another tree to avoid is the *Ailanthus altissima*, Tree of Heaven. This tree is anything but heavenly. Its aggressive growth habit has negatively impacted native plants and wildlife. Tree of Heaven is everywhere along the Highway 50 corridor. It produces five-

inch long reddish brown seedpods that readily self-sow. Branches sprout from stumps and roots.

Saturday, March 5, UCCE/Master Gardeners will present the class, “Propagation I – Start from Seed.” The class begins at 1:00 PM (a departure from our usual class start time) and will be held in the Bethell-Delfino Agriculture Building at 311 Fair Lane in Placerville.

Master Gardeners are available to answer home gardening questions Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to noon, by calling (530) 621-5512. Walk-ins are welcome. The office is located at 311 Fair Lane in Placerville. For more information about our public education classes and activities, go to our Master Gardener website at http://ceeldorf.ucdavis.edu/Master_Gardener/.

The Master Gardener 2nd Annual Spring Plant Sale promises a great selection of annuals, vegetables and perennials. The sale will be held on Saturday, April 16th in the parking lot of the Veterans Memorial Building, 130 Placerville Dr. in Placerville and benefits Master Gardener community outreach programs.