

## Garden Update

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### Fall's Red Leaves

Glorious golds are fall's main colors in our region, helping to foster appreciation for autumn reds, which tend to be rarer. Instead of adding the over-utilized 'Red Sunset' and 'Autumn Blaze' maples to your landscape, diversify the neighborhood and community by choosing from fall's red leafed trees that are not maples. When a variety or species is overplanted, it makes way for certain insects and/or diseases to run rampant, much like emerald ash borer is for ash trees and pine wilt in pine trees. Some ideas for fall red-leafed trees include:

#### Pagoda Dogwood, *Cornus alternifolia*

This small tree is great for urban landscapes, reaching just 20 feet in height with a similar spread. Fall color is reddish, mixed with some purple.

#### Sweetgum, *Liquidambar styraciflua*

Fall color in the sweetgum is gorgeous shades of red, gold, and purple. This tree can reach a height of 45 feet and a width of 30 feet. The fruit of the sweetgum is not for the faint-hearted, producing spiny 1-inch balls that are not fun to step on in bare feet when getting the Sunday paper from the front stoop. Trees should be planted well away from paved surfaces to get around this issue.

#### Black Tupelo, *Nyssa sylvatica*

Black Tupelo, also known as black gum, should be transplanted as a small tree, due to its reputation for being difficult to establish when planted as a large tree. Trees can reach 40 feet in height at maturity and fall color is a mix of yellow, orange and red.

#### Shumard Oak, *Quercus shumardii*

While closely related to the pin oak, this lovely upright oak does not have issues with high pH soils as pin oak does. Shumard oak grows to 40 feet, with a similar spread. Fall color is russet-red to red.

#### Sassafras, *Sassafras albidum*

One of the best native trees for fall color, the sassafras has mitten-shaped leaves in fall colors of yellow to orange and red to purple. Tree height ranges from 30-50 feet. Like the black tupelo, the sassafras should be transplanted as a small tree to establish successfully.

#### Shrubs

Don't forget red colors can be added to landscapes in the form of shrubs. The burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*), black chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*), Firedance™ dogwood (*Cornus sericea* 'Bailadeline'), Autumn Inferno™ cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster* 'Bronfire'), dwarf fothergilla (*Fothergilla gardenii*), Jetstream™ oakleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*), and many varieties of viburnum are excellent additions for fall's red colors.