TOUGH TREES FOR OKLAHOMA

Bald Cypress  
*Taxodium distichum*
- native to swampy areas, and grows profusely in a wide range of soils
- must have full sun and considerable moisture
- a moderate to rapid grower, can grow 60-100 ft. high, pyramidal shape
- fern-like needles turn coppery bronze in the fall before falling off

Bur Oak  
*Quercus macrocarpa Michx*
- can tolerate poor soil and low rainfall better than other oaks
- a slow to moderate grower to 80 ft. tall with a 30-50 ft. spread
- acorns are sometimes as large as 2 inches in diameter
- occasional aphids and spider mites but not a concern

Chinese Pistache  
*Pistacia chinensis*
- drought resistant, tolerates extreme heat and drying winds
- grows well in urban area regardless of soil conditions
- a moderate grower, 20-40 ft. high with a 20-30 ft. spread
- has brilliant orange to red orange color in the fall

Kentucky Coffee Tree  
*Gymnocladus dicidia* (male only)
- attractive tree with a light crown that is open and loose
- tolerates poor, rocky soils, either well drained or poorly drained, likes sun
- a moderate grower 60-80 ft. tall with irregularly spreading branches
- male tree is preferred, female has seed pod which is poisonous

Lacebark Elm  
*Ulmus parvifolia*
- drought and wind resistant, can tolerate poor, compacted soil
- a rapid grower 40-50 ft. high with a 30-40 ft. spread
- has a round to oval crown, low branches, not a central leader
- leaves turn pale yellow in the fall
- attractive grayish, orange brown lacy, flaking bark

Oklahoma Redbud  
*Cercis reniformis*
- “Oklahoma” cultivar is the most drought resistant and will tolerate most soils
- needs full sun
- a slow grower with a round canopy reaching a height of 25 ft. with a 15 ft. spread
- pink to purple flowers in the spring
- foliage turns yellow to yellow green in the fall with brown seedpods

Pinyon Pine  
*Pinus cembroides*
- tolerates a wide range of soil types, and hot locations with drying winds
- can not tolerate wet, heavy clay soils
- a slow grower reaching 20-30 ft. high with a 15-20 ft. spread
- rounded, upright with a central leader
- dark green to blue green needles with a grotesque looking cone
- pine tip moth may kill some new branches but this will make the tree more compact

Sawtooth Oak  
*Quercus acutissima*
- prefers acidic, well drained soils but adapts to others
- a moderate to fast growing, rounded tree, 35-45 ft. tall and wide
- dark green leaves turn yellow to golden brown in the fall, remain on the tree all winter
Shumard Oak  
*Quercus shumardi*

- will tolerate urban conditions, can grow well in poor soil
- a moderate to rapid grower reaching 80-100 ft. with a 50-60 ft. spread
- can tolerate restricted root systems such as between a sidewalk and curb

Sugar Maple  
*Acer saccharum*

- cultivar “Caddo” is extremely drought resistant and tolerant of drying winds
- a very dense shade tree which makes it difficult to grow anything beneath it
- a slow to moderate grower reaching up to 60-80 ft. with a 40-60 ft. spread
- fall color is a brilliant red to red orange to yellow

Western Soapberry  
*Sapindus drumondi*

- extremely tough, tolerates poor soil with little moisture
- fruit is mildly poisonous and very bitter to taste, may cause a rash in some people
- a moderate grower, 30-40 ft. tall with a 25-35 ft. spread and slightly weeping branches
- brilliant yellow gold in the fall

Winterberry Euonymus  
*Euonymus bungeana*

- well adapted to dry soil and most exposures
- sometimes used for windbreaks and screens
- a moderate grower 15-20 ft. tall and 10-12 ft. wide
- leaves turn pink to red in the fall
- showy fruit is yellow to pinkish-white, opens to expose an orange seed coating in the fall

**UNDESIRABLE TREES FOR OKLAHOMA**

Some of the trees listed below are popular and widely planted. Each tree has some negative features that you should be aware of before considering them for your landscape needs.

- **Bradford Pear**  
  susceptible to fire blight, old branches split easily

- **Cottonwood**  
  weak wood, is short lived, gets root rot

- **Crabapple**  
  many pests and disease

- **Green Ash**  
  borers and disease

- **Lombardy Poplar**  
  has invasive roots, suckers, is short lived, gets crown gall

- **Silver Maple**  
  weak, soft wood that breaks easily

- **Pin Oak**  
  iron chlorosis

- **Purpleleaf Plum**  
  pests and disease, short lived

- **Siberian Elm**  
  weak wood, elm leaf beetles