

# Plant an Oak!

## (But not a Pin Oak!)



**O**ur great state of Missouri is the native home to a diversity of native oak species adapted to a variety of site conditions - from the rocky hilltops of the Ozarks, to the rich soils of the valleys, and the fertile basins of our wonderful rivers and streams.

### Why NOT a Pin Oak, a Missouri native species?



**W**hile pin oaks thrive and prosper in their native habitat of rich and acidic soils of river bottomlands, trees planted in alkaline (high calcium) soils develop iron chlorosis, which leads to poor health and yellow to yellowish-green foliage – a common condition exhibited at many of our urban and suburban landscapes with soils containing significant deposits of crushed limestone remaining from construction site activities.

### Choose the RIGHT tree for the RIGHT place.

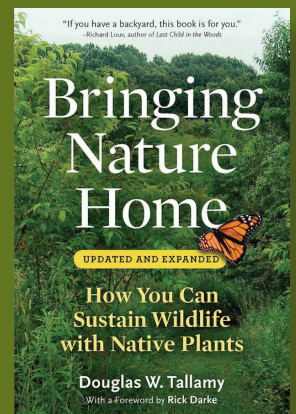


**W**ith our native oaks, there are alternate species to choose which are better adapted to the challenging conditions of urban sites with significantly disturbed soils – high clay content and high soil PH (alkaline) – along with the rigors of our diverse climatic environment.

*see other side for great choices of native oak species*

**B**eyond the beauty and summer shade comfort offered by our majestic oaks, the entire oak genera (*Quercus*) offers significant life support for a diversity of vertebrate and invertebrate wildlife species. Aiding in the creation of an essential food source for baby birds, the oak group supports over 500 species of moth and butterfly caterpillars – baby birds eat caterpillars, worms and insects, not bird seed.

For more, refer to the book *Bringing Nature Home* by Douglas W. Tallamy and visit [www.BringingNatureHome.net](http://www.BringingNatureHome.net).



# Top Oak choices for Missouri landscapes

## White Oak Group

- **Swamp White Oak** (*Quercus bicolor*) – although growing in low, wet areas in the wild, this long-lived (up to 350 years!) oak species can withstand drought conditions once established. Tolerant of diverse landscape site conditions.  
**Acorn volume:** medium **Acorn size:** medium
- **Overcup Oak** (*Quercus lyrata*) – another oak native to flooded sites, this species can tolerate somewhat drier conditions. An excellent shade tree for low-lying areas.  
**Acorn volume:** low **Acorn size:** medium
- **Swamp Chestnut Oak** (*Quercus michauxii*) – Another attractive shade tree for low-lying sites adaptable to a variety of landscape conditions. Fall foliage color ranges from reddish to yellowish-brown. Highly deserving of great use in the landscape as a shade tree.  
**Acorn volume:** low/medium **Acorn size:** large
- **Chinkapin Oak** (*Quercus muehlenbergii*) – occurring naturally in alkaline, rocky soils, this oak species is highly adaptive to urban site conditions. Forms an attractive shade tree and relatively resistant to insects and disease.  
**Acorn volume:** medium **Acorn size:** small

## Red Oak Group

- **Cherrybark Oak** (*Quercus pagoda*) – a relatively fast growing oak, native to bottomland sites growing with tulip tree, shellbark hickory, Shumard oak, swamp chestnut oak, red mulberry and red buckeye. Quite adaptable to urban site conditions.  
**Acorn volume:** low **Acorn size:** small
- **Northern Red Oak** (*Quercus rubra*) – a long-lived, fast growing species first introduced to cultivation in the late 1600's. Found growing naturally throughout the state of Missouri growing in well-drained soils of moist ravines, north and east facing slopes, and on slopes at the base of bluffs.  
**Acorn volume:** medium **Acorn size:** large
- **Nuttall Oak** (*Quercus texana*) – grows naturally on poorly drained clay flats and floodplains. Quite similar in appearance to the Pin Oak but much more adaptable to varied soil conditions of Missouri and exhibits a better branching habit.  
**Acorn volume:** low/medium **Acorn size:** medium
- **Shumard Oak** (*Quercus shumardii*) – a moderately fast growing, long-lived tree highly adaptable to sites ranging from wet to dry. One of the first oaks to turn color in the autumn with vibrant red tones.  
**Acorn volume:** medium **Acorn size:** large

**NOTE:** In the spirit of planting for diversity, many other highly beneficial tree genera, beyond oaks, should be considered for accommodating the conditions of your landscape site. However, oaks form the foundation of our strong and long-lived urban forest and deserve priority consideration when planning for shade trees for your landscape.



For more information about native oaks and other excellent native tree choices for your landscape:

**[www.grownative.org](http://www.grownative.org)**