

# **Excellence Tree Award Criteria**

**by Vance Wood (Approved by Board 4/1/1995)**

This compilation of trees and shrubs is intended to reflect representatives of the native flora usable for bonsai within the MABA environment. The reason for the document is to serve as a guideline for those who may be called upon to judge a showing of bonsai within the sphere of influence of the Mid-America Bonsai Association. The intention is to create a list of approved plant material acceptable solely on the grounds of their being an indigenous species. It is from this list that the recipient of the MABA Award for Excellence in Bonsai is to be chosen.

This is not to rule out other trees as acceptable for showing at a MABA function or being ruled out for awards such as best of show. The idea is to draw special attention to those species that are native to our particular areas and in turn encourage development of this unique local material. It is the purpose of MABA to encourage and develop not only local talent but to develop local material. MABA should not become simply a reflection of the rest of the country in our view, cultivation, and material, but instead, where ever possible, to establish a regional identity valid in its own right, with its own unique contributions to the art of bonsai as important as the California juniper, the Florida buttonwood and bald cypress. The list, nation wide, is quite large except for here. It is our purpose to change that view.

There is no question that there are many imported species of trees and shrubs that are delightful, beautiful, and traditional subjects for bonsai that are represented in the many MABA member collections. These trees should be recognized for the skill needed to develop them. The accomplishment of developing any tree into an extraordinary bonsai should be acknowledged and awarded, less we run the risk of taking on some other form of bonsai fascism.

However the creation and distribution of this unique and special award should follow strictly the guidelines set forth and approved by the board of directors for the sole purpose wherein it was set forth: A special recognition and award for cultivation of native material as defined. The purpose for this list is to assist both judges and exhibitors in determining what species are eligible for the award in discussion. The problem is that there are in cultivation many named cultivars allowable on that basis. It is possible that a grower has a plant to exhibit that would be eligible but goes

unrecognized due to ignorance of the heritage of the material used. This becomes a particular problem with junipers. Many of us have a tendency to think of most juniper cultivars sold in the nursery trade as being Asian in origin. It is not uncommon to find Wilton's blue rug juniper listed as *Juniperus Chinensis Wiltonii*. This infers that this tree or shrub is a cultivar of a Chinese juniper, which would disqualify it for the MABA award. However Wilton's juniper is in reality *Juniperus Horizontalis*. It is our hope that this list will help to relieve some of the confusion.

The best effort possible has been put forth to complete the most accurate list possible. It is more than possible that there are errors of omission especially in the area of the *malus* species, considering that Dr. Michael A. Dirr is not able to weed out of the cultivars and their sources, domestic and foreign. In this case the basic wild flora are the only ones included in the list. Additions and deletions from this list are welcomed with appropriate proof and references. The changes proposed to the list are to be approved by the board or it's designate.

#### References:

Manual of Woody Landscape Plants by Michael A. Dirr

Trees of North America by Dr. C. Frank Brockman, Professor of Forestry Emeritus

College of Forest Resources, University of Washington

## **PINE *PINACEA***

*Pinus Strobus* (Eastern White Pine)

- Compacta
- Contorta
- Fastigiata
- Fastigata var. glauca
- Little Giant
- Minima
- Nana
- Pindula
- Prostrata
- Pumila

*Pinus Banksiana* (Jack Pine)

- Uncle fogy

*Pinus Resinosa* (Red Pine)

*Pinus Echinata* (Short Leaf Pine)

*Pinus Virginiana* (Virginia Pine)

*Pinus Rigda* (Pitch Pine)

- Sherman Eddy

## **LARCH *LARIX***

*Larix Laricina* (Larch)

- Tamarack

## **SPRUCE *PICEA***

*Picea Mariana* (Black spruce)

- Doumetii
- Nana
- Ericoides

*Picea Glauca* (White Spruce)

- Albertiana
- Conica
- Densata

## **HEMLOCK *TSUGA***

*Tsuga Canadensis* (Canadian Hemlock)

- 100's of cultivars all of which are Canadensis

## **FIR *ABIES***

*Abies Balsamea* (Balsam Fir)

- Hudsonia
- Nana

## **BALD CYPRESS *TAXODIUM DISTICHUM***

*Taxodium Distichum* (Bald Cypress)

- Monach of Illinois
- Pendens
- Shawnee Brave

## **YEW *TAXUS***

*Taxus Canadensis* (Canadian Yew)

- Pyramidalis
- Stricta

## **CEDAR - CYPRESS *CUPRESSACEAE***

*Thuja Occidentalis* (Northern White Cedar)

- 100's of cultivars
- Aurea
- Canadian Green
- Douglasii Aurea
- Emerald
- Globosa
- Little Gem

## **JUNIPER JUNIPERUS**

*Juniperus Communis* (Common Juniper)

Compressa  
Depressa  
Depressa Aurea  
Green Carpet

*Juniperus Virginiana* (Eastern Red Cedar)

Canaetii  
Cupressifolia  
Glaucia  
Globosa  
Kosteri  
Pyramidalis

*Juniperus Horizontalis* (Creeping Juniper)

Admirabilis  
Bar Harbor  
Blue Mat  
Emerald Spreader  
Hughes  
Plumosa  
Plumosa Fountian  
Wiltonii Blue Rug

## **WILLOW SALIX**

*Salix Discolor* (Pussy Willow)

## **BIRCH BETULA**

*Betula Papyrifera* (Paper Birch)  
*Betula Alleghaniensis* (Yellow Birch)  
*Betula Nigra* (River Birch)

## **BEECH FAGUS**

*Fagus Grandifolia* (American Beech)

## **OAK QUERCUS**

*Quercus Alba* (White Oak)  
*Quercus Macrocarpa* (Bur Oak)  
*Quercus Prinus* (Chesnut Oak)  
*Quercus Bicolor* (Swamp White Oak)  
*Quercus Muehlenbergii* (Chinkapin Oak)  
*Quercus Rubra* (Northern Red Oak)  
*Quercus Velutina* (Black Oak)  
*Quercus Palustris* (Pin Oak)  
*Quercus Ellipsoidalis* (Northern Pin Oak)  
*Quercus Imbricaria* (Shingle Oak)

## **HOP - HORNBEAM OSTRYA**

*Ostrya Virginiana* (Eastern Hop-Hornbeam)

## **HORNBEAM CARPINUS**

*Carpinus Caroliniana* (American Hornbeam)

## **ELM ULMUS**

*Ulmus Americana* (American Elm)  
*Ulmus Rubra* (Slippery Elm)  
*Ulmus Thomasii* (Rock Elm)  
*Ulmus alata* (Winged Elm )\*

## **HACKBERRY CELTIS**

*Celtis Occidentalis* (American Hackberry)

## **WITCH - HAZEL HAMAMELIS**

*Hamamelis Virginiana* (Common Witch-Hazel)

## **APPLE *MALUS***

*Malus Coronaria* (Sweet Crabapple)

*Malus Ioensis* (Prairie Crabapple)

## **CHERRIES & PLUMS *PRUNUS***

*Prunus Serotina* (Black Cherry)

*Prunus Pensylvanica* (Pin Cherry)

*Prunus Virginiana* (Common  
Chokecherry)

*Prunus Americana* (American Plum)

*Prunus Nigra* (Canada Plum)

## **SERVICE BERRIES *AMELANCHIER***

*Amelanchier laevis* (Allegheny  
Serviceberry)

## **HAWTHORNS *CRATAEGUS***

*Crataegus Pruinosa* (Frosted Hawthorn)

*Crataegus Pedicellata* (Scarlet  
Hawthorn)

*Crataegus Galli* (Cockspur Hawthorn)

*Crataegus Mollis* (Downy Hawthorn)

## **REDBUD *CERCIS***

*Cercis Canadensis* (Eastern Redbud)

## **DOGWOOD *CORNACEA***

*Cornus Florida* (Flowering Dogwood)

*Cornus Alternifolia* (Alternate-leaf  
Dogwood)

*Cornus Drummandii* (Rough leaf  
Dogwood)

*Cornus Stolonifera* (Red-Osier Dogwood)

## **MAPLE *ACER***

*Acer Saccharum* (Sugar Maple)

*Acer Nigrum* (Black Maple)

*Acer Fubrum* (Red Maple)

*Acer Pensylvanicum* (Striped Maple)

*Acer Spicatum* (Mountain Maple)

*Acer Sacharinum* (Silver Maple)

## **HORSE CHESTNUT *AESCULUS***

*Aesculus Octandra* (Yellow Buckeye)

*Aesculus Glabra* (Ohio Buckeye)

## **TUPELO *NYSSA***

*Nyssa Sylvatica* (Black Tupelo)

## **LAUREL *KALMIA***

*Kalmia Latifolia* (Mountain Laurel)

## **RHODODENDRON *RHODODENDRON***

*Rhododendron Latifolia* (Rose bay  
Rhododendron)

## **PERSIMMON *DIOSPYROS***

*Diospyros Virginiana* (Common  
Persimmon)

\*Added 2015, P. Weishaar



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