

Westlock County Tree Makers Shelterbelt Program 2023

Tree Descriptions

Black Hills Spruce

- Native to the North Dakota region
- Cold tolerant
- Compared to other spruce species it is more compact, dense, and has a conical form. This makes it more suitable for smaller spaces.
- Max height: 25m (82ft), spread 4m (12ft)
- Seedling size: 14-35cm



Scots Pine

- A very hardy tree
- Makes a good shelterbelt tree as well as an accent tree
- Has distinctive orange, flaky bark
- Prefers dryer soil, will not tolerate un-drained sites
- Max height: 15m (49ft), spread 5m (15ft)
- Seedling size: 8-25cm



Siberian Larch

- Unique tree whose needles turn yellow and fall for the winter
- Is tolerant of poorly drained soils
- Has a very long lifespan (over 100 years)
- Max Height: 20m (66ft), spread 8m (25ft)
- Seedling size: 12-35cm



Okanese Hybrid Poplar

- One of the very best shelterbelt trees
- Grows very fast, is drought and cold tolerant, disease resistant
- Does not produce “fuzz” in the spring
- Max height: 18m (59ft), spread 8m (26ft)
- Seedling size: 15-60cm



Laurel Leaf Willow

- Fast growing (multiple feet per year) under good growing conditions
- Maintains its green leaves late into the fall
- Cannot tolerate drought
- Prefers moist, well drained soils
- Max height 26m (49ft), spread 15m (25ft)
- Seedling size: 20-50cm



Saskatoon Berry

- Native variety, this saskatoon is hardy and dependable for berry growth
- Expect fruit in its second or third year of growth
- White flowers in the spring
- Max height: 3m (10ft), spread 2.4m (8ft)
- Seedling size: >15cm



American Elm

- Grows very quickly in its early years
- Its unique umbrella canopy shape makes it a nice accent tree.
- Can tolerate poor soil conditions (salt tolerant)
- Tall tree at maturity. Often planted in a row alongside country driveways
- Max height: 30m (98ft), spread 15m (50ft)
- Seedling height: >15cm



Villosa Lilac

- Late bloomer (mid-late June) compared to other lilac varieties
- Establishes and grows very quickly
- Very drought tolerant but will not do well in wet areas
- Does not sucker like other lilac varieties
- Max height: 5m (16ft), spread 3m (10ft)
- Seedling size: 6-45cm tall



White birch

- Native tree, also known as paper birch due to its bark
- Fast growing, makes an excellent shelterbelt or an accent yard tree
- Tolerates a wide variety of soil types but really thrives in loamy rich soil
- Can survive in a variety of moisture conditions, dry to wet
- Requires full sun
- Max height: 18m (60ft), spread 11m (35ft)
- Seedling size: 20-50cm



White Spruce (2 year old)

- Slow growing but once established they are one of the best shelterbelt trees available
- Salt intolerant, be wary of planting near roads!
- This native species is more resistant to needle cast, a fungal disease, that has caused significant damage to blue spruce in the area
- Max height 25m (82ft), spread 6m (20ft)
- Seedling size: 27-48cm



Amur Maple

- Shorter tree at maturity
- Leaves turn brilliant red in the fall
- Can tolerate both dry and wet conditions, is a very hardy tree
- Max height: 6m (20ft), spread 5m (16ft)
- Seedling size: 10-30cm



Sundancer Poplar

- Very fast growing. Tall, columnar shape
- Drought tolerant. Can handle a variety of soil types and moisture levels
- This hybrid is disease resistant, unlike some other columnar deciduous trees
- Max height 12m (40ft), spread 3m (10ft)
- Seedling size: 22-45cm



Planting for Pollinators Package



Planting for Pollinators

Did you know: Alberta is home to over 200 native bees! They are heroes of the plant world, studies indicate they do 4x more pollinating compared to the domestic European honey bee!

There has been a lot of discussion around the declining number of pollinators and the factors contributing to that loss. It has brought awareness to the ecological services pollinators provide us with and has shown us how much the agriculture and food industry relies on these insects. We can take action to help pollinators, and we can promote native plant biodiversity at the same time!

By purchasing a “Planting for Pollinators” package, you are providing a food source for native insects and the benefits of planting native species will bring a unique beauty to your yard.

Each package contains: 3 Red Elderberry, 3 Chokecherry, 3 Pin Cherry, 3 Pussy Willow, 2 Saskatoon.
Seeds from 8 different native wild flowers.



Hemp Squares

- The number one reason we see tree establishment fail is lack of vegetation control around the seedlings
- These trees start out small and if vegetation is not controlled around where they are planted grass and weeds outcompete them for sunlight and moisture, leading to tree death or poor growth. Mulch around the trees is critical for their success.
- The squares are biodegradable, from our trials we expect them to provide mulching cover for 2-3 growing seasons
- These squares are produced in Alberta and the hemp is sourced from western Canadian agricultural producers
- Sold in bundles of 5- \$3/bundle. 12” squares





Have a tree planting project you'd like to undertake? The ALUS program is here to help agricultural producers by providing expertise, resources, and direct financial support to farmers and ranchers to help build nature-based solutions on their land to deliver ecosystem services to sustain agriculture, help build community resilience, and combat biodiversity loss for the benefit of future generations.

Eligible Projects include:

- Shelterbelt establishment along field edges
- Planting riparian vegetation along creeks/ wetlands/ rivers
- Wildlife planting for forage and habitat corridors
- Creating pollinator foraging and hibernation

If you'd like to learn more, please call Lisa at 780-674-8069 or email lisa.card@hwy2conservation.com



Plastic Mulch Applicator To Rent

Putting in a large shelterbelt?
Consider using plastic mulch!

The County has plastic mulch for sale and the plastic mulch applicator to rent.

Reasons to consider utilizing plastic mulch:

- Suppresses weeds and grass for easier maintenance
- Hold moisture in the soil, requiring less watering
- Warms the soil faster in the spring so the trees start growing sooner
- Trees grow stronger and faster (One year's growth of Okanese poplar planted in 2022) →



This equipment and mulch is in high demand! **YOU MUST RESERVE IT IN FAR IN ADVANCE.**
To reserve, or to learn more please contact Lisa at 780-674-8069



Planting for Pollinators



Chokecherry (*Prunus virginia*):

Chokecherry are very versatile shrubs, they are adaptable to all levels of sun and moisture. Not only a favorite of pollinators, other wildlife (especially birds) will happily use chokecherries for food sources. The berries can be utilized for jams and syrups.

How it benefits pollinators: Chokecherries produce a lot of flowers at a valuable time, after the willows have flowered but before other food sources are readily available.

Soil texture: clay, loam or sand. Drainage: dry-moist soils Light: full sun to shade

Height: 2-7m Width: 1-5m



Pin Cherry (*Prunus pensylvanica*):

This lesser known native species can be utilized in a shrub group planting but also is attractive as a single tree. White flowers are abundant on pin cherries in May. These trees are also known as bird cherries, and rightly so as birds will feast on the tiny cherries in the late summer/early fall.

How it benefits pollinators: Bees and butterflies readily utilize pin cherries blooms in the beginning of the flowering season, May-mid June.

Soil texture: clay, loam, or sand. Drainage: moderate. Light: full sun

Height: 2-7m Width: 1-5m



Pussy Willow (*Salix discolor*):

One of the first plants to wake up from winter, this tall shrub signals that spring has arrived when it starts to send out its flowers in April. This willow is very fast growing under the right conditions. It also doesn't mind getting trimmed, whether by humans for branch weaving, or spring bouquets or by animals nibbling on it for food.

How it benefits pollinators: Pussy willow is essential for pollinators. It is the first food source available to them in the spring. Not only that, it has high quality pollen that lasts for a long time so it provides food for pollinators until other species are available to them later in the spring.

Soil texture: clay, loam, or sand. Drainage: moderate. Can handle flooding Light: full sun



Red Elderberry: (*Sambucus racemose*)

This bushy shrub has a unique leaf shape, an umbrella like canopy when mature and has showy white clusters of flowers making it very visually appealing. It's berries are highly sought after by birds in the fall who readily disperse the seeds throughout the area.

How it benefits pollinators: Flowering a little later than other native species, its June flowers provide a food source after other shrub species have finished or are winding down. It is also valuable for habitat for hibernation, as the stems are hollow and can be utilized by small native bees.

Soil texture: clay, loam, or sand. Drainage: moderate Light: full sun, partial shade

Height: 3-4m Width: 2.5m



Saskatoon (*Amelanchier alnifolia*)

Iconic to the prairie woodlands, saskatoons are very noticeable when they are in bloom. While some other native shrub species have white flowers in clusters, Saskatoons are covered in flowers across the canopy. You can hear the bees hum when they are blooming! The berries make a tasty treat for both humans, other mammals and birds.

How it benefits pollinators: Saskatoons are one of the most common flowering shrub in a native vegetated landscape. The sheer amount of volume of blooms per plant makes this shrub very popular for pollinators. It's also a larval host plant for several butterfly species.

Soil texture: clay, loam, sand Drainage: moderate Light: full sun to part shade

Height: 2m- 5m Width: 2-4m