

Selecting A Crabapple

One of the most beautiful sights in spring is a blooming crabapple. They are spectacular!

It's no wonder the crabapple is the favorite small tree in North Dakota. If you go to a garden center, you will find lots of different crabapple cultivars available.

Which one is best for you? Here are some tips to help you make a choice.

Hardiness. This is always the first consideration when selecting a tree. It makes no sense to buy a tree that will die over winter. All crabapple cultivars discussed in this article are hardy to Zone 4. If you live in the far northern area of the state, focus on cultivars hardy to Zone 3.

Flower Color. This is usually the key factor. Pink or white? Besides your personal color preference, keep in mind where the tree will be planted. What is the background? For example, a white-blossomed tree will be less showy if the background is a white building. Likewise, a tree with dark pink flowers may not contrast well against a red brick building.

Fruit Persistence. This is very important! Why do we focus so much on *flower color*? The flowers will remain on the tree for only a *couple weeks*. I encourage you to consider how long the fruits persist on the tree. Some cultivars have fruit that persist on the tree through much of the fall and



Crabapples are popular for their spectacular blooms.

winter, adding color to our landscapes for *several months*. Cultivars known for their persistent fruits include 'Adams', 'Adirondack', 'Donald Wyman', Harvest Gold®, 'Prairifire', 'Profusion', Red Jewel®, 'Red Splendor', Royal Raindrops®, 'Sargent' and Sugar Tyme®.

Fruit Size. Smaller is better. Larger fruits generally create bigger messes when they drop. Avoid cultivars with fruits that are 2/3 inch or larger in diameter. Pea-sized fruits are much less messy and often stay on the tree longer.

Lack of Fruit. For gardeners who hate the mess created by dropping fruits, sterile cultivars are available, namely Marilee® and

'Spring Snow'. Sterile trees are most useful in patios and courtyards.

Fruit Color. We automatically think crabapple fruits are red, but some cultivars produce gold fruits. That's special. These cultivars include Cinderella®, Harvest Gold®, Lollipop® and 'Louisa'.

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Selecting a Crabapple (continued from Page 1)

Not all red fruits are the same. Some red fruits are dark and dull. Others are brilliant. Cultivars with the brightest fruits include 'Adirondack', 'Donald Wyman', Red Jewel® and 'Sargent'.

Foliage Color. Trees with purple or bronze foliage will stand out and make an eye-catching statement in the landscape. These cultivars include 'Cardinal', Gladiator™, 'Prairifire', 'Purple Prince', 'Royal Beauty' and 'Royal Raindrops®'.

On the other hand, a crabapple with green foliage can provide a more natural, relaxing effect in landscapes.

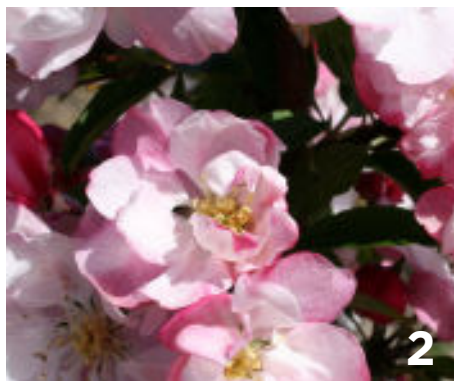
Tree Shape. Many cultivars have a rounded canopy, but some have upright to columnar canopies suitable for tight spaces. These include 'Adirondack', Gladiator™, Ivory Spear™ and Marilee®.

A few cultivars ('Louisa', 'Royal Beauty' and Ruby Tears™) have graceful, weeping habits; this can make a statement as a specimen tree in your landscape.

'Sargent' is a great choice if you are looking for a dwarf (8-foot-high) tree with a horizontal habit.

Resistance to Disease. Look for trees that resist diseases. It's heart-breaking to have a crabapple tree that drops its leaves in mid-summer due to scab disease or dies prematurely from fire blight. Scab is more of a problem in the eastern part of our state because of its higher humidity.

More Information. Look over the online charts of Johnson's Nursery and J. Frank Schmidt Nursery. Most local nurseries get their products from Bailey Nursery. Go to their website, type in "crabapple" and learn about their selections.



Crabapple trees offer many attractive features. Note the gold fruits of Harvest Gold® (photo 1), pink buds of Marilee® (2), magenta flowers of 'Prairifire' (3), cherry-red fruits of Red Jewel® (4), horizontal habit of 'Sargent' (5), fuchsia-pink flowers of Show Time™ (6), white blooms of 'Spring Snow' (7) and abundant fruits of Sugar Tyme® (8).

Ornamental Crabapples for North Dakota



CV.	ZONE	SIZE		SHAPE	FOLIAGE	FLOWER	FRUIT ¹	RESISTANCE	
		H	W					SCAB	FIRE.
Adams	4	20	20	Rounded	Green	Pink	Red; 5/8"; P ¹	Good	Excel.
Adirondack	4	18	12	Upright	Green	White	Bright red; 1/2"; P	Excel.	Excel.
Cardinal	4	15	20	Spreading	Dark red, glossy	Deep pink-red	Deep red; 1/2"	Excel.	Good
Cinderella®	4	8	5	Oval	Dark green, cut	White	Yellow; 1/4"; P	Fair	Excel.
Donald Wyman	4	20	25	Rounded	Green, glossy	White	Bright red; 3/8"; P	Good	Fair
Firebird®	4	10	10	Rounded	Dark green	White	Bright red; 3/8"; P	Excel.	Excel.
Gladiator™	2	20	9	Upright	Bronze-purple	Bright pink	Red-purple; small	Good	Good
Harvest Gold®	4	20	20	Rounded	Dark green	White	Gold; 1/2"; P	Fair	Fair
Ivory Spear™	4	18	7	Narrow	Dark green	White	Bright red; 1/2"	Excel.	Excel.
Lollipop®	4	10	10	Rounded	Green	White	Gold-yellow 3/8"	Good	Good
Louisa ²	4	10	12	Weeping	Dk green, glossy	Pink	Gold-yellow; 3/8"	Good	Good
Marilee®	4	24	10	Narrow	Green	Double white	Nearly sterile	Good	Good
Perfect Purple	4	20	20	Rounded	Deep purple	Deep pink-rose	Purple-red	Fair	Fair
Prairifire	4	20	20	Rounded	Ages to red-green	Bright magenta	Maroon; 1/2"; P	Excel.	Good
Profusion	4	20	20	Upright	Ages to bronze	Red-purple	Maroon; 1/2"; P	Fair	Good
Purple Prince	4	20	20	Rounded	Ages bronze-grn	Rose-red	Maroon; 1/2"	Excel.	Good
Red Jewel®	4	15	12	Upright	Dark green	White	Bright red; 1/2"; P	Good	Fair
Red Splendor	3	23	20	Upright	Ages to green	Bright pink	Bright red; 1/2"; P	Good	Fair
Royal Beauty	3	10	8	Weeping	Purple	Dark pink	Dark red; 1/2"; P	Good	Excel.
Royal Raindrops® ²	4	20	15	Upright	Purple, cutleaf	Bright pink-red	Red; 1/4"; P	Excel.	Good
Ruby Dayze®	4	22	16	Upright	Ages to bronze	Bright magenta	Deep red; 1/4"	Excel.	Excel.
Ruby Tears™	4	8	13	Weeping	Burgundy-green	Pink	Dark red; 3/8"	Good	Excel.
Sargent	4	8	12	Horizontal	Dark green	White	Bright red; 1/4"; P	Excel.	Excel.
Show Time™	3	22	20	Rounded	Bronze-green	Fuchsia-pink	Red; 1/2"	Fair	Good
Spring Snow	4	25	20	Oval	Bright green	White	Nearly sterile	Poor	Fair
Sugar Tyme®	4	18	15	Oval	Green	White	Red; 1/2"; P	Excel.	Good
Tina	4	6	8	Rounded	Dk green, small	White	Bright red; 1/4"	Excel.	Good

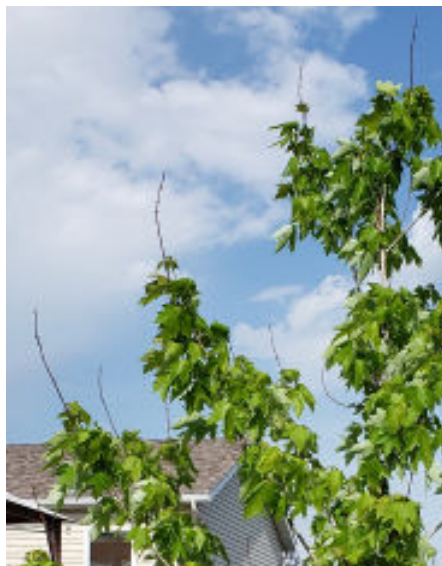
¹P = Fruits persist into winter.

²Branch tips died back during an extreme winter at the Fargo research plot.

Information from Johnson's, J. Frank Schmidt, and Bailey Nurseries; and Todd West, NDSU. Photo from keeva999.

Plant Health Care

Landscapes



Winter Kill on Leafy Trees

Upper branches of many leafy trees died back. Shown here is 'Autumn Blaze' maple, one of the most popular shade trees in North Dakota.

Trim back dead shoots. Know your hardiness zone and plant hardy trees.

Studies have shown that Freeman maple trees suffer less winter damage when mulched. Wood mulch will insulate roots, conserve moisture, and prevent tree bark from being wounded by mowers and weed whips.



Shredded Bark on Bur Oak

Woodpeckers attack galls on bur oak branches, looking to eat wasp larvae living inside the chambers. The bark of the tree gets shredded, and branches above the damaged area may stop receiving water from the roots, causing them to die back.

Trim off the badly damaged branches. In severe cases, the trees are removed. There are no clear-cut ways to prevent the galls forming on bur oak.



Galls on Leafy Trees

Mites bite into leaves in early spring, creating bumps. Silver maple (shown), hackberry, linden and ash are often affected. Damage is mostly aesthetic. The leaves are functional. Pesticides are not useful at this time.



Frost Injury on Leaves

Brown or black blotches are appearing on tissue damaged from late spring frosts. Established plants usually survive and may send out new sprouts later this year. No treatments are needed.



Ash Anthracnose

Blotches appear on leaf margins; leaves curl and drop. Shaded areas in canopy are most affected. Rake fallen leaves. Prune in winter to increase air movement in canopy.



Pear Slugs

Slimy larvae feed on upper surfaces of leaves. Rose, pear and cherry are often affected. Knock down pests with a jet spray of water or kill with spinosad, carbaryl or insecticidal soap. Damage weakens but rarely kills plants.



Mow Tall

Cut at the highest height you can accept (at least 2.5 inches). Tall lawns develop deep root systems, smother emerging weeds and keep the soil cool. Tall lawns stay green longer into the summer compared to short lawns.

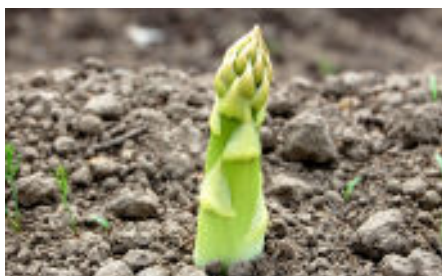
Plant Health Care

Fruits and Vegetables



Winter Sunscald Injury

The rays of the sun in winter can warm the trunk, causing cells beneath the bark to break dormancy. After the sun sets, these activated cells freeze and die. Damage appears as a vertical crack on the southwest side of the trunk. Use white tree guards in winter to reflect away the sun rays. For now, remove tree guards to prevent strangling the trunks and sheltering pests.



Stop Cutting Asparagus

Stop harvesting when 75% of spears become thinner than a pencil. The remaining spears will turn into ferns that provide energy for next year's crop.



Prevent Messy Crabapples

Fallen crabapples in autumn create a mess on sidewalks and patios. Carbaryl insecticide will abort fruits less than 3/5 inch in diameter. Ethephon can be added to increase thinning.



Hungry Caterpillars

Many types of caterpillars are active in apple trees during spring. Most focus on eating leaves, but some will nibble on fruits. These fruits may be picked off or allowed to fall off the trees by themselves.



Baldheaded Beans

Bean seedlings emerge from the soil with damaged growing points. This is caused by rough handling of bean seeds (when processed or sowed) or severely crusted soils. Thin out these stunted, unproductive plants.



Plum Pockets

Unripe fruits become large, hollow and spongy. Remove infected fruits before spores emerge. Prevent with a spray of chlorothalonil, Bordeaux mix or lime sulfur before bud break in spring.



Spindle Galls on Plum

These finger-like projections are caused by Eriophyid mites. The galls cause very little harm to the tree and control measures are not recommended.



Clippings Safe in Gardens?

Did you spray your lawn with a herbicide to kill dandelions? Read the label of the herbicide before using lawn clippings in your garden. Clippings of lawns treated with dicamba may damage garden plants all season.

Weather Almanac for June 14–20, 2020

Site	TEMPERATURE ¹				RAINFALL ^{1,4}				GROWING DEGREE DAYS ^{1,5}			
	June 14–20				June 14–20		2020		June 14–20		2020	
	Avg	Norm	Max	Min	Total	Norm	Total	Norm	Total	Norm	Total	Norm
Bottineau	64	64	90	45	0.00	0.96	2.35	5.82	81	86	535	519
Bowman	62	63	89	35	0.34	0.76	2.68	5.86	77	79	499	469
Carrington	69	65	94	44	0.13	0.90	2.04	6.46	111	93	561	556
Crosby	59	62	80	38	0.87	0.71	2.94	4.89	63	74	504	467
Dickinson	64	62	90	40	0.04	0.88	1.76	6.07	84	79	542	498
Fargo	75	67	97	52	0.31	0.94	5.08	6.76	137	102	656	605
Grafton	71	64	94	55	3.22	0.92	7.14	6.14	120	87	580	536
Grand Forks	72	65	97	51	0.91	0.84	3.51	5.93	119	90	593	546
Hazen	65	65	94	38	0.30	0.86	1.35	6.26	88	90	573	586
Hillsboro	72	66	98	50	1.70	0.84	5.40	6.42	123	96	610	564
Jamestown	70	65	94	43	0.00	0.80	2.74	6.05	116	92	546	539
Langdon	67	62	92	48	0.53	0.96	2.85	6.26	98	72	492	433
Mandan	68	65	95	38	0.13	0.81	1.16	5.99	102	90	596	519
Minot	64	64	89	40	0.01	0.84	1.96	6.18	85	84	525	482
Mott	65	64	92	39	0.11	0.69	1.03	6.03	84	85	550	512
Rugby	64	64	90	44	0.01	0.83	1.94	6.38	84	84	532	532
Wahpeton	74	68	97	53	1.27	0.76	5.78	6.97	131	107	641	646
Watford City	63	63	87	38	0.33	0.70	1.88	4.98	77	81	536	509
Williston	62	66	82	40	0.07	0.66	0.85	4.82	73	95	562	589
Wishek	68	63	90	41	0.05	0.76	2.78	5.64	107	80	519	471

DAYLENGTH (June 22, McClusky, ND)²

Sunrise: 5:45 AM Daylength: 15h 58m
 Sunset: 9:43 PM Change since June 16: -1m

LONG-TERM OUTLOOKS³

June 26–30: Temp.: Above Normal; Precip.: Above Normal
 June 28–July 4: Temp.: Above Normal; Precip.: Above Normal

^{1,2,3} Sources: North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network, www.sunrisesunset.com, and National Weather Service, respectively.

^{4,5} Rain data begin April 1. GDDs for garden vegetables are not available. GDD data in this table are for corn, which responds to temperature as most vegetables grown in gardens. Data begin May 1 with base minimum and maximum temperatures of 50 and 86°F, respectively.

Credits

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Written by Tom Kalb, who expresses gratitude to the Horticulture/Forestry Team for their contributions to this report, and Todd West for reviewing the list of recommended ornamental crabapples.

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