

## Happy Creek Arboretum, Front Royal VA

*An arboretum is a collection of trees.*

The earliest known arboretum was recorded in ancient Egypt where foreign trees like frankincense and ebony were collected for their exotic beauty, shade, and scientific study. The focus of the collection at Happy Creek Arboretum is on trees that thrive in this area, with about 30 trees identified with both their common and scientific names.

Happy Creek Arboretum is an *introductory* type of educational facility. It is ideal for the serious landscaper who wants to see what a particular tree would look like around a home at maturity. It is equally ideal for the beginning student of tree study—child or adult—to learn identification characteristics such as names, bud and branch patterns, leaf shapes. Observing the different faces of the trees through the seasons allows seeing tree responses to weather and temperature, which trees are “early” and which are “late”, which have showy flowers and which have flowers you can barely see. It will also show the tree responses to proper care like correct pruning and mulching. In general, you can begin your study of tree science, advance it, or just plan a sensible and beautiful landscape around your home.

## Happy Creek Arboretum Purposes

- To grow a collection of hardy trees that can be expected to thrive in Front Royal and Warren County (USDA hardiness Zone 6) for the education and enjoyment of residents and visitors.
- To highlight varieties of flowering trees, especially cultivars and hybrids of native species.
- To promote greater diversity in tree selection by homeowners and businesses.
- To provide a site for field study of trees and their characteristics throughout the four seasons.
- To provide a site for planting of commemorative and memorial trees.
- To enhance the quality of life in the community by contributing to the beauty of the area.

Adopted Arbor Day 2001 by:

### Front Royal/Warren County Tree Stewards

P.O. Box 2001  
Front Royal, VA 22630

Website: <http://www.treesfrontroyal.org>

Email: [frwctreestewards@comcast.net](mailto:frwctreestewards@comcast.net)

## Happy Creek Arboretum

A space to enjoy

A place to learn



Location: Commerce  
Avenue between Main and  
Prospect Streets,  
Front Royal, VA

*A stop along the*



# TREE IDENTIFICATION GUIDE



Here are some of the trees featured at Happy Creek Arboretum. They are native, or cultivars of native trees, unless listed otherwise.

## DEFINITIONS USED HEREIN:

**Cultivar:** Short for cultivated variety; i.e., a form of plant produced by human intervention. Cultivars do not come true from seed nor reproduce themselves in nature. The cultivar name is shown in single quotation marks following the plant's Latin (botanical) name. For example, see Redbud: *Cercis canadensis* is the botanical name and 'Forest Pansy' is the cultivar.

**Specimen Tree:** A tree that is showcased by planting it alone as a landscape feature or accent.

**Apple Serviceberry** (*Amelanchier x grandiflora* 'Autumn Blaze'). Small, multi-trunked, with white spring blooms appearing before leaves. A shrub or small tree, normally to height of 30 ft; with fruits enjoyed by wildlife.

**Carolina Silverbell** (*Halesia tetraptera*). A large shrub or a medium tree with a rounded crown, commonly to 35 feet tall. Clusters of white, bell-shaped flowers in early spring followed by dark green leaves. Nice as specimen tree or mixed with other woody plants. Likes well-drained, acid soil in sun or part shade. Width 20-35 ft.

**Fringetree** (*Chionanthus virginicus*). A small tree or large multi-stemmed shrub. Very showy, fragrant white flowers appear in late spring; fruits, dark blue to nearly black with a fleshy pulp that encloses a large, stone seed, ripen in late summer. Bark is dark gray-brown in color, becoming somewhat furrowed with reddish scales.



**Redbud** (*Cercis canadensis* 'Forest Pansy'). Not your everyday redbud, 'Forest Pansy' has brilliant, mauve-pink flowers, appearing before its smooth, heart-shaped leaves, are a harbinger of spring in Appalachia. Bark is smooth brownish-gray, becoming furrowed with age. Seed pods 2-3" long may persist through winter. 'Forest Pansy' has darker leaves and flowers than redbuds in the wild.

**Red Maple** (*Acer rubrum*). Also called Swamp Maple. Medium to fast growing tree with dense clusters of red flowers in spring before the paired, 2 1/2 to 4 in., 3-5 lobed leaves appear. Fall color may be red, gold, or orange. Soft, tightly-grained wood used for boxes, handles, wooden ware, and novelties. Native with many cultivars.

**Scarlet Oak** (*Quercus coccinea*). A fast-growing Oak with scarlet red foliage in the fall. Scarlet Oak tolerates a variety of soils and can grow 60' to 80' feet tall with a spread of 40' to 50'.

**Sweetbay Magnolia** (*Magnolia virginiana*). A small tree typically not over 20 feet in height and multi-stemmed, grows taller farther south. Fragrant white blooms, 2-3 in. diameter, appear before leaves in spring in the North (evergreen farther South). Tolerates moist to wet soils. Plant in spring for best results. Width 10-20 ft.

**Weeping Higan Cherry** (*Prunus subhirtella* 'Pendula'). A small tree reaching 20 to 40 feet in height with slender weeping branches. Small clusters of light pink flowers, 1/2 to 3/4 inch across, in small clusters, appear in early spring before the sharply serrated, narrow, elliptical leaves. Gray-brown bark becomes slightly furrowed with scaly ridge tops. *Non-native*.

**Winter King Hawthorn** (*Crataegus viridis* 'Winter King'). Spectacular in winter when the bare branches are laden with red, berry-like fruits that often stay through late winter. White flowers in spring. Tolerates a variety of soils. Full sun. Mature width 20-30 ft.

**Witch-hazel** (*Hamamelis virginiana*). A small tree or shrub with arching branches, usually growing in dense multi-stemmed clumps reaching up to 20 feet tall. Bright yellow flowers (look like yellow spiders on plant), appear in mid to late fall. Bark is smooth, gray to gray-brown even on very old stems