Plains Cottonwood

Populus deltoides



Plains Cottonwood
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 90 feet

Spread: 70 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 2a

Other Names: Eastern Cottonwood

Description:

A positively massive, wide spreading shade or windbreak tree, extremely fast growing and adaptable to exposed, dry conditions and poor soils; roots can be aggressive so don't plant near a house, only suitable for larger properties and parks

Ornamental Features

Plains Cottonwood has rich green deciduous foliage on a tree with a round habit of growth. The large heart-shaped leaves turn yellow in fall. However, the fruit can be messy in the landscape and may require occasional clean-up.



Plains Cottonwood in fall
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Plains Cottonwood is a deciduous tree with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage.

This is a high maintenance tree that will require regular care and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Messy
- Invasive
- Disease

Plains Cottonwood is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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- Shade
- Windbreaks and Shelterbelts

Planting & Growing

Plains Cottonwood will grow to be about 90 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 70 feet. It has a high canopy of foliage that sits well above the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. As it matures, the lower branches of this tree can be strategically removed to create a high enough canopy to support unobstructed human traffic underneath. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 70 years or more.

This tree should only be grown in full sunlight. It is an amazingly adaptable plant, tolerating both dry conditions and even some standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. It is not particular as to soil type or pH, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is native to parts of North America.

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