

Callery Pear (*Pyrus calleryana*)



This tree is often referred to as Bradford pear. Bradford is simply a cultivar of Callery pear and was one of earlier ones sold commercially. The Callery Pear is a deciduous tree that can grow to be anywhere from 30 to 50 feet in height and have a spread of about 30 to 40 feet. These trees were over sold as a miracle tree as they are very adaptable to different soils, tolerate dryness and pollution and prefer to be planted in the full sun. This was a main reason there were many planted decades ago in New Albany. The planting of this tree across the country in the late 1970's reached near epidemic proportions. Even as the problems surfaced with these Pear trees, such as limbs cracking and breaking easily due to the growth pattern of their branch structure, the nursery industry rushed to release new cultivars that were sold as being stronger or better than Bradford, continuing the Callery Pear craze. Pear wood (of any species) is also among the finest-textured of all fruitwoods. It is prized for making woodwind instruments, and pear veneer is used in fine furniture.

Now the Callery pear is no longer desirable in yards or as a street tree, and has even made Indiana's Exotic Invasive list. Urban Foresters, including those here in New Albany, have removed this tree from their planting lists years ago.