

White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*)



The White Ash tree is a large tree with straight trunk and dense, conical or rounded crown of foliage with whitish lower surfaces. They can grow in excess of 100 feet tall and are large-canopied, deciduous trees with dense branching, pinnate leaves, and early fall color. The leaves turn yellow, then change to purple in autumn. The White Ash also prefers deep, moist, well-drained soils and appear to be PH adaptable.

These trees were once popular trees in the urban forest and in home landscapes. The White Ash tree is also famous for one of its basic wood products—the baseball bat. No other wood has the pliant, strong, yet light qualities of ash wood. The wood is also extensively used for non-impact tool handles, furniture, hockey sticks, polo mallets, church pews and other products.

In 2002 an insect called Emerald Ash Borer was accidentally introduced to America entering into southeastern Michigan via wooden packing material. Since the arrival of this invasive insect, the planting of Ash trees has ceased in the urban forests, including here in New Albany, and many of the existing Ash trees have declined and/or been removed. Thanks to modern arboricultural practices such as maintaining a diverse population of trees in the urban forest a major catastrophe like was experienced with Dutch Elm Disease was avoided. It is recommended that no one plant any *Fraxinus* or Ash species.