



The Urban Tree Book: An Uncommon Field Guide for City and Town

By Arthur Plotnik

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The Urban Tree Book: An Uncommon Field Guide for City and Town By Arthur Plotnik

Open **The Urban Tree Book** and discover the joys of forest trekking--right in your city or town. This first-of-a-kind field guide introduces readers to the trees on their block, in neighborhood parks, and throughout the urban landscape. Unlike traditional tree guides with dizzying numbers of woodland species, *The Urban Tree Book* explores nature in the city, describing some 200 tree types likely to be found on North America's streets and surrounding spaces, including suburban settings.

With telling descriptions and precise botanical detail, this unique guide not only identifies trees but brings them to life through history, lore, anecdotes, up-to-date facts, and hundreds of fascinating characteristics. More than 175 graceful illustrations capture the charm of trees in urban settings and depict leaf, flower, fruit, and bark features for identification and appreciation.

The Urban Tree Book will inform even the most knowledgeable plant person and delight urbanites who simply enjoy strolling beneath the shade of welcoming trees. An engaging excursion into the "urban forest," this complete guide to city trees will both entertain and enlighten nature lovers, urban hikers, gardeners, and everyone curious about their environment. Includes a tree planting-and-care section, tree primer, and exploration guide

Is backed by the expertise of the renowned Morton Arboretum

Incorporates new "urban forestry" perspectives

Covers urban trees across the continent

Lists key organizations and institutions for tree lovers

Selects the best tree sites on the Internet

Updates many guides by 20 years

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

North America's cities may be crowded and tumultuous places of steel and glass, but there is scarcely one of them that does not have some quiet forested corner, some green place of solace and repose. Arthur Plotnik, the author of the fine writer's handbook *The Elements of Editing*, celebrates such places in *The Urban Tree Book*, an information-rich, entertaining guide to the trees you are likely to encounter in places such as Toronto, Washington, Vancouver, and Kansas City. (For residents of cities farther south and west, he includes a section on palm trees.) A late bloomer--he writes that he came to an appreciation of city greenery not as a naturalist, but as a writer given to staring out his window at a cluster of silver maple, ash, and horse chestnut trees--Plotnik has mastered a wide variety of materials. He describes not only the ranges, biology, and life histories of some 50 common urban trees, but also gathers oddments of folklore and nicely appropriate bits of urban history, such as, for instance, the fact that Al Capone favored an ash bat "to keep his goons in line."

As Plotnik observes, at the dawn of the 21st century, 75 percent of all North Americans live in cities. In his pages these urbanites will find a wealth of information to help better acquaint themselves with the natural life that perseveres in their midst. --Gregory McNamee

From [Booklist](#)

Urbanites love the trees that shade their streets, muffle traffic noise, and soften the city's hard edges, but most possess scant arboreal knowledge. When Plotnik, a Chicago resident, realized how little he knew about the lives of the trees on his block, he launched a dynamic inquiry into the character of city trees and their strategies for survival. The result is a uniquely entertaining and immensely enlightening guide to 200 species of "tough trees for tough places." Plotnik expresses his sense of wonder about urban trees found all over the U.S. with warmth and wit as he recounts their history and lore and medicinal and spiritual legacies. Going beyond factual description, he evokes each species' distinctive ambience, from the way their leaves filter light to the sound they make in the wind. Plotnik also celebrates landmark trees, assesses the new urban forestry movement, and provides a wealth of useful resources. Vetted by experts at the Morton Arboretum and illustrated with Mary Phelan's superbly graceful drawings, this is a tree book with depth and sparkle. Donna Seaman

Review

"Urban residents ... will want to consider Arthur Plotnik's indispensable URBAN TREE BOOK ..." --Verlyn Klinkenborg -- *New York Times Book Review*, June 4, 2000

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