



## Invasive Trees Found in the Puget Sound Region

Seattle Urban Nature (SUN) is a non-profit organization dedicated to creating tools to empower stewards for healthy urban ecosystems. SUN assists community groups, government, non-profit organizations, and private citizens in their efforts to survey, map, restore, and maintain urban forests in the Puget Sound region. To support SUN or for more information, please visit [www.seattleurbannature.org](http://www.seattleurbannature.org).

**Cherry laurel** (*Prunus laurocerasus*) is an evergreen tree and is among the most prevalent invasive species in Seattle's parks and open spaces. This popular garden species grows and reproduces in the forest environment, and competes with native species. The seeds are dispersed by birds who eat the berries.



*Cherry laurel*

**English holly** (*Ilex aquifolium*) is another invasive evergreen plant dispersed by birds. This traditional landscape plant is one of the most common invasive species found in Seattle's urban forests and can be spread from miles away.



*English holly*

**Portugal laurel** (*Prunus lusitanica*), an evergreen invasive tree, is often overlooked as a threat to our urban forests. This plant is able to reproduce in the forest understory in low light conditions. It competes with and displaces native species when established. It is spread by birds who eat the berries.



*Portugal laurel*

**Horse chestnut** (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) is another commonly planted European horticultural plant. This deciduous tree has five-lobed leaves and attractive flowers. The nuts are spread to natural areas by birds and animals. Once established, it competes with native vegetation for space, light and nutrients.



*Horse chestnut*

**European mountain ash** (*Sorbus aucuparia*) is a deciduous horticultural tree with clusters of orange-red berries that attract birds. This tree is frequently found in our urban forests, courtesy of birds dropping seeds.



*European mountain ash*

**European hawthorn or one-seed hawthorn** (*Crataegus monogyna*) is a deciduous tree which is capable of reproducing in forest conditions. It is a common invasive species found in Seattle's forests and often creates dense thickets in disturbed areas. It is spread by birds who eat the clusters of red berries produced in the fall. European hawthorn is a popular horticultural plant.



*European hawthorn*

Photos courtesy of Nelson Salisbury



## Native Trees for Landscaping

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**Western red cedar** (*Thuja plicata*) is a beautiful evergreen conifer tree that can grow up to 200 feet tall. It is usually found in moist soils and tends to prefer the shade. This tree is an important part of the culture of the Native Americans in this region, and is held in the highest regard for its healing and spiritual powers.



Western red cedar



**Bitter cherry** (*Prunus emarginata*) is a small tree that can reach a height of about 45 feet. It produces white to pinkish flowers that will add a splash of color to any native plant garden. Its bright red cherries make this tree striking, but are quite bitter in flavor. Bitter cherry can grow in full sun.



Bitter cherry



**Douglas fir** (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) is a large evergreen conifer that can grow over 200 feet tall. It is well-adapted for dry or moist soil, and can grow in full-sun. It has thick, ridged bark that is rough and dark brown. Under natural conditions, this tree can live over 1000 years!



Douglas fir



**Pacific madrone** (*Arbutus menziesii*) is a unique evergreen tree with shiny green leaves and orange-red berries. Its most distinct feature is the orange to brownish bark that peels off in large strips revealing smooth green wood. This tree is found in dry, sunny, and well-drained sites, and is often associated with Douglas fir trees.



Pacific madrone leaves, berries & bark



**Western hemlock** (*Tsuga heterophylla*) is an elegant evergreen conifer tree found in the Pacific Northwest. It has down sweeping branches, feathery needles, and reddish-brown bark. It can grow in moist to wet soils, and is extremely shade-tolerant. With a high tannin content in the bark, Native Americans used it as a tanning agent.



Western hemlock



**Cascara** (*Rhamnus purshiana*) is a small tree that can grow up to 30 feet tall. It has egg-shaped leaves and produces blue to black berries that are edible but not so tasty. Its silver-gray bark was used as a strong laxative by Native Americans in the region. Cascara can grow in dry to wet soil, and is often found alongside vine maples.



Cascara