

## Bald Cypress

### *Taxodium distichum*

Bald cypress is a long-lived, deciduous wetland species that grows along rivers, streams, and creeks as well as in swamps with slow moving water. It can live up to 600 years old or more. It is a legendary tree of the Deep South known for its "knees," moss-draped crown, and buttressed trunk. Exfoliating bark is red-brown to silver. As a deciduous conifer, the leaves drop off in autumn, and its cones are round balls that release their seeds in autumn and winter. Cypress domes provide unique shelter for a variety of birds, mammals and reptiles. When properly grown, bald cypress trees make a fine long-term addition to one's property.

**Height:** 50 to 70 ft. at maturity. Some very old trees grow to 100 ft. or more.

**Diameter at Breast Height (DBH):** 36-72 in. average.

**Crown Shape/Spread:** It has a pyramidal-shaped crown when it is young that gradually becomes flat-topped with age. The canopy spread is typically 20-30 ft.

**Leaf:** The leaves are deciduous, linear, and spreading 2-ranked like a feather. Each leaf is ½" to ¾" long. The flat needle-like leaves are light yellow-green. Fall foliage is orange to brown.

**Flowers:** Flowering occurs March-April. The flowers are brown and inconspicuous and not a showy variety.

**Fruit:** The fruit is a round cone that is about ¾" to 1" in diameter. They are wrinkled, green, and leathery.

**Landscape Requirements: Right Tree – Right Place**

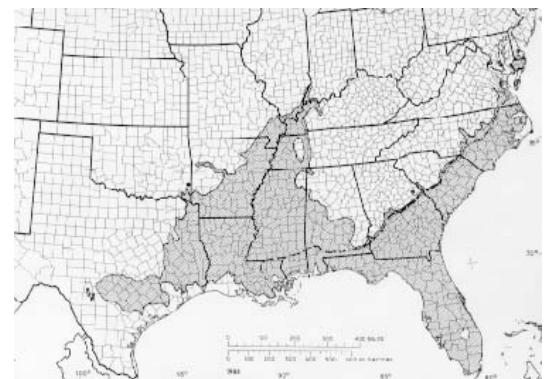
**Distance from Utility Line:** 60+ ft minimum

**pH:** 4.5-6.0

**Moisture:** It is adaptable to wet or dry conditions and can withstand flooding.

**Sun Light:** Full sun to partial shade

**Landscape Usage:** Bald cypress is a majestic tree with soft, ferny foliage that enhances many landscapes. It is a very popular ornamental tree, grown for its orange-brown fall color which can also range to a dull red. This stately tree makes a good specimen for parks and large lots. It is a good street tree and is particularly choice for swampy areas where few other trees will grow. It provides light shade with easy fall clean up.



Range Map

# TREE PLANTING GUIDELINES

**1) Plan ahead: Think Right Tree - Right Place.** Choose a quality grown species of tree that fits your yard. Look for utilities above and below ground. To reduce summer air conditioning costs or to just help cool your home, plant large deciduous shade trees on the east, south or west sides of your home. Plant conifers (evergreens) on the north side or on the side with prevailing winter winds.

**2) Before digging call Arkansas One Call**



**1 (800) 482-8998 or simply 811**

**3) Gather your tools:** gloves, rounded shovel, pick axe for rocky sites, water hose or bucket, hammer to drive stake(s), heavy duty scissors to cut containers if needed, or to cut burlap, wire cutters to cut wire baskets.

**4) Gather your supplies:** stake(s), arbor tie or wire tie, B12 root simulator or mycorrhizal fungi (not needed but can be beneficial) and organic mulch (due to cypress tree devastation, cypress mulch is not recommended).

**5) Dig the planting hole no deeper than the height of the root ball and 2 to 3 times wider than the root ball.** You should have a shallow, wide planting hole. Very Important – the tree should never be planted deeper than the depth of the root ball. This is the worst mistake made in planting trees. It is best if the tree is actually planted high by 1 to 1-½ inches. This insures that after the tree settles it will still be planted at the proper depth.

**6) For containerized plants remove the tree from the container; be gentle on the trunk.** If it won't come out push in the sides of the container – a little bit. This may free the soil up enough to slip the root ball out. If that doesn't work, cut the container. If tree is ball & burlap, set tree in hole, cut away the wire basket and remove. Cut and remove all twine or other wrapping and top 1/3 of burlap.

**7) Backfill the planting hole with the soil you removed when digging the hole.** Do not add any other soil amendments or special soil mixes, they are not needed and in fact can cause future rooting problems.

**8) When the hole is half full of soil, water to help remove air pockets, then continue to fill the hole until it is full and water again.**

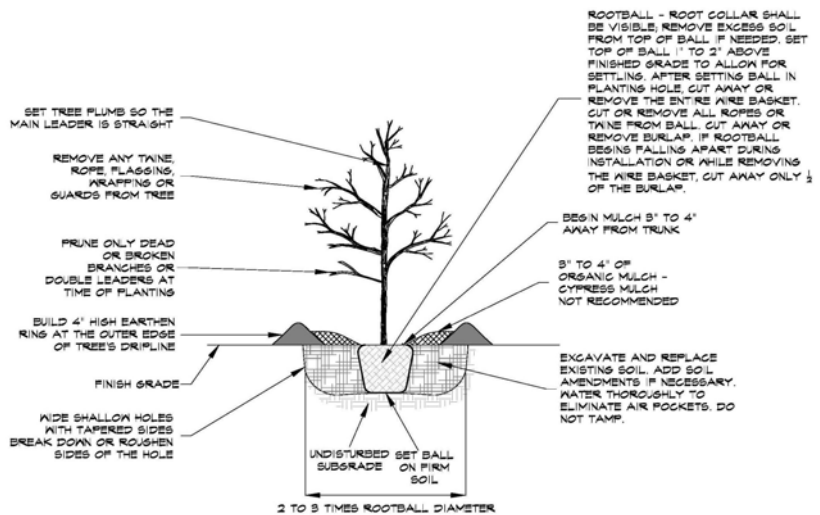
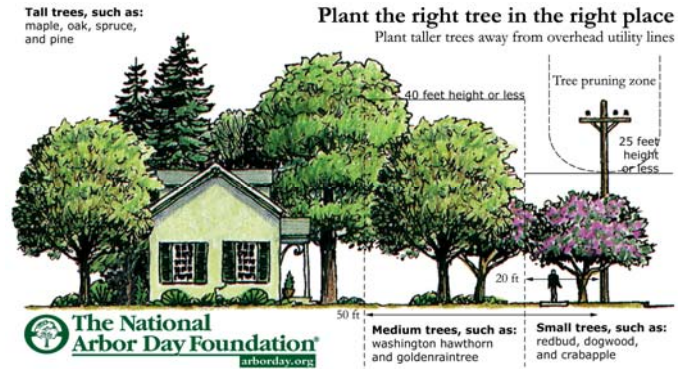
**9) Use the left over soil to build a berm around the outer edge of the planting hole.** This will direct water flow to the root ball where it is needed.

**10) Top dress the root ball and berm with organic mulch 4 inches deep.** Do not let the mulch contact the tree trunk. Taper it away from the trunk.

**11) Stake the tree only if it is needed (remove all staking after one year).**

**12) Maintain the newly planted tree on a watering schedule for the next year.** New trees should receive around an inch per week during the growing season (Spring through early Fall). Soil should remain moist, but not wet. Under and/or over watering is the worst mistake made in establishing trees.

**13) Enjoy your tree and the benefits it brings you and the community.**



The Urban Forestry Advisory Board selected native trees and shrubs to give away this year because they should be easy to grow and maintain, will reflect our town's unique setting as a city on the edge of the Ozarks and because many pollinators, birds and other wildlife depend only on the native plants they evolved with for food and habitat. We encourage residents to Google "Why Native Plants" to learn more. We also encourage residents to eliminate invasive plants like privet, bush honeysuckle and English ivy because they crowd out native plants and inhibit the seasonal transition of native plants that our wildlife depend on.