

Book Review

By William C. Miller III—Bethesda, Maryland

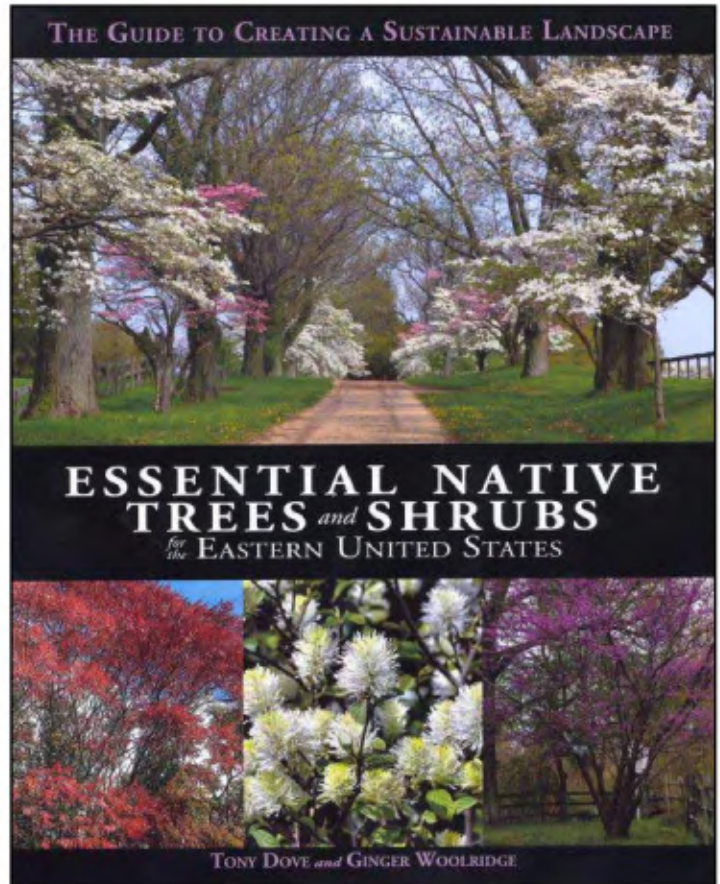
Essential Native Trees and Shrubs for the Eastern United States by James Anthony (Tony) Dove, Jr. and N. Virginia (Ginger) Woolridge. Published by Charlesbridge, Watertown, MA and designed and produced by Bunker Hill Studio Books, Piermont, NH, 2018, in hard cover. Identifiers: LCCN 2017016789 and 2017018661. ISBN 9781632892041, 9781632892058, and 9781623545031. Book dimensions and weight: 10.25 x 8.25 x 1.125 inches, 3.06 lbs, 313 pages, generously illustrated, and reinforced for library use. The inside flap gives the cost of this book at \$35 US and \$41 CAN. A quick Internet survey at the time of this review, indicates that the book is available from Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Alibris, Abe Books, Walmart, and several other sources that I am not familiar with. Internet prices range from \$16.76 (used) to \$35 (new), and the book is also available directly from Tony Dove... although he notes that Amazon might be the “easiest source.” (See Figures 1, 2.)

I have never had the pleasure of meeting Ginger Woolridge, but her credentials are excellent. She has a BS degree in Landscape Architecture from Penn State, and an MBA from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania. Her many years of experience in landscape design range from garden design, design instruction at the USDA, and commercial and residential development and construction. She serves on the Board of Trustees of 1000 Friends of Maryland and recently served as a consultant for the National Geographic Kids *Ultimate Explorer Field Guide: Trees*.

On the other hand, I have known Tony Dove for upwards of 36 years. Our paths first crossed in the early 1980s when he served on the Azalea Society’s (ASA) Board of Governors (1983-1989) and was elected to ASA National President in 1985.

Tony’s record and list of accomplishments is extensive. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Ornamental Horticulture at the University of Maryland in College Park in 1968, graduating first in his class. From 1969 to 1972, he served his country in the US Army in Vietnam.

Returning to civilian life, he was an Extension Agent in Horticulture in the Cooperative Extension Service in Annapolis. In 1973, he took a position as a Horticulturist II with the Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks where he designed, developed, and maintained 25 acres of formal and woodland gardens at the Historic London Town and Gardens at Edgewater, Maryland, on South River. Appointed Chief, Environmental Facilities and Programs in 1989, he was responsible for managing 4,000 acres of undeveloped parklands, wetlands, and public natural



▲ Figure 1— Cover image from the book's dust cover

▼ Figure 2— Ginger Woolridge and Tony Dove



Photo Della Dove

areas including the acquisition and development of the Quiet Waters Farm and the Baltimore & Annapolis Trail. He was the administrative director of the Jug Bay Wetland Sanctuary and served as liaison with NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the US Department of Commerce) to obtain the National Estuarine Research Reserve Status for that sanctuary in 1990.

In 1991, Tony took a job as Branch Head of Horticultural Services at Tryon Palace Historic Sites and Gardens in New Bern, North Carolina where he supervised and maintained all the historic garden restorations as well as supervising the programs, festivals, projects, and activities for the main campus and the gardens. In 1994, he accepted a position as Director of the Clark Botanic Garden and Deputy Commissioner, Parks and Recreation Department in Albertson, New York. In 1997, Tony became Chief, Grounds Management Branch of the Horticultural Services Division for the Smithsonian Institution's 180 acres of gardens which annually hosts 24 million visitors. In 2006, Tony accepted a position as Horticulturist at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center in Edgewater, Maryland, where he was responsible for the environmental, historic horticultural and educational programs for this 3,000-acre research and educational facility which included 13 miles of waterfront. On a very positive note, Tony retired on December 26, 2018, bringing to a close an impressive career of service to state, local and the federal government. While there was not a list

of publications in the biographical section of the book, I was able to determine that Tony has published four articles in *The Azalean*.¹⁻⁴

Based on the authors' combined 75 years of experience, the book was designed from the outset to be a highly usable reference for landscape designers, horticulturists, home gardeners, and native plant enthusiasts. The Table of Contents page reveals the simplicity of the book's design. The Preface, written by Tony Dove, recounts his earliest personal experiences with his grandfather that shaped his philosophy, his future, his interest in native plants, and his understanding of and appreciation for the problems experienced by professionals and novices alike in the area of plant selection where the goal is to promote sustainability. He makes the case for the obvious advantages of using native plants, which by their circumstances and characteristics, are better and more reliable performers than many very lovely and highly desirable exotic plants from places far away.

The Introduction page, written by Ginger Woolridge, provides rationale for the book's environmental focus. She discusses the unique situation on the East Coast where we have a wealth of native plant material to choose from, and she reminds us that there is economy in recognizing the close relationship and the interdependency between native flora and fauna. From my perspective, a particularly nice touch is the section entitled "How to Use This Book." It shows how to take the guesswork out of identifying and evaluating suitable plant material for one's garden, or more importantly... for someone else's garden. In retrospect, I wish I had a dime for every desirable plant in my garden that I later discovered was an expensive mistake. It may have been a dismal failure where it only survived until the first frost, or if it survived, it was something the local deer population was content to regularly reduce to ground level (e.g. *Hosta* sp.). Then there were the situations where the plant survived but it ultimately proved to be too much plant for the space allocated to it. With the advent of this book, my plant selection process is significantly enhanced.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I is titled "Site Condition and Plant Attributes." Part II is "Primary Trees and Shrubs," and Part III is "Secondary Plants."

In Part I, the authors identified 22 desirable tree/shrub characteristics or traits (see Table 1.) Under each trait (A-V), is a list in tabular form, of time-tested native plants given in alphabetical order by binomial nomenclature. (See Fig. 3 for a partial example). These recommended trees/shrubs specifically exhibit the trait, and the reader is directed to pages in Part II where detailed information about the recommended plants can be found. For example, under Trait A, "Trees that are salt tolerant," there are 33 recommendations. The first tree on the list is *Aesculus pavia* and the reader is referred to page 52 in Part II for information about red buckeye, the common name for *Aesculus pavia*.

Part II contains detailed characterizations of the trees/shrubs: their use in the landscape, their seasons of interest, their form (general dimensions), their color features, the USDA zones, and their culture (where and how it grows). It also suggests suitable companion plants and the plant's relationship to wildlife. Finally, it includes an illustration

▼ Table 1— Desirable Landscape Traits.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Trees that are salt tolerant B. Trees that are drought tolerant, once established C. Trees for poorly drained or compacted soils D. Trees suitable for rain gardens and bioretention areas E. Trees suitable for irrigated rooftop gardens F. Trees that are wind tolerant, once established G. Trees that are evergreen H. Trees that have showy flowers I. Trees that have ornamental or interesting fruit J. Trees that have good autumn foliage colors K. Trees for street tree planting L. Trees that are deer resistant M. Trees that have exceptional winter interest N. Trees tolerant of shade O. Trees that perform best in full sun P. Trees for planting beneath utility lines Q. Trees for narrow spaces R. Trees 50'+ S. Trees 35' - 50' T. Trees 15' - 35' U. Trees that provide food and shelter for birds directly V. Trees with attractive bark |
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that shows the relative plant size at some time in the future. This is a very nice feature that addresses an often overlooked consideration. A carelessly chosen plant that eventually and significantly exceeds its allocated space can be an expensive headache.

Part III, "Secondary Plants," are desirable trees and shrubs, many of which are long time favorites, but which have problems or limitations that may outweigh their desirable traits. Thus, they are excluded from consideration in Parts I or II. Following Part III there are pages that describe the authors' backgrounds, a Glossary, a page of Sources, Photograph and Illustration Credits, and an index. It is worth emphasizing that the photographs are of first quality. With noted exceptions, the photographs were the work of the authors and Tony's wife Della. The illustrations are by Ginger Woolridge, and they are a major plus.

My bottom line... without reservation, I highly recommend this book.

Additional References

- 1 Dove, James A. Jr. "Evolution of a Public Garden with Emphasis on Azaleas." Address presented May 1, 1983, at the National ASA meeting in Chevy Chase, Maryland. September 1983. *The Azalean*. 5(3): 55-56.
- 2 Dove, Tony. "Companion Plants for Azalea Gardens." March 1989. *The Azalean*. 11(1): 10-11.
- 3 Dove, James A. "Some Thoughts on Plant and Site Selection." March 1991. *The Azalean*. 13(1): 4-5.
- 4 Dove, James (Tony). "B.Y. Morrison Hybrid Azaleas." September 1992. *The Azalean*. 14(3): 62.

William C. Miller III is a past member of the ASA board of directors, past co-chairman of the ASA's membership committee, past chairman of the ASA's public information committee, the longest serving member of the ASA's Editorial Advisory Board, and a frequent contributor to *The Azalean*.

A. Trees that are salt tolerant		ALL CATEGORIES THAT APPLY:
<i>Aesculus pavia</i>	52	A, B, C, H, J, K, L, O, P, T
<i>Amelanchier</i> spp.	54	A, B, C, D, E, F, H, I, J, K, L, N, P, Q, T, U, V
<i>Betula lenta</i>	57	A, B, D, J, K, L, M, O, S, V
<i>Betula nigra</i>	59	A, C, D, L, M, O, R, V
<i>Carya ovata</i>	65	A, B, F, J, M, O, R, V
<i>Celtis laevigata</i>	68	A, B, C, D, F, K, L, M, N, R, U, V

▲ Figure 3— Partial List of Trees/Shrubs that are Identified as Salt Tolerant


▼ Figure 4— Page 52 from Part II that describes *Aesculus pavia*


Aesculus pavia


Red Buckeye


ATTRIBUTES/USE IN LANDSCAPE – The red buckeye is a small tree or multi-stemmed shrub with showy spring flowers after early spring leaf out. It has attractive early spring and summer foliage. It may be used as a specimen, street tree, at the woodland edge, and in a rain garden for residential and park projects.

SEASONS OF INTEREST

WINTER


SPRING


SUMMER


AUTUMN


FORM – The red buckeye grows to about 10'-20' (35') tall x 10'-15' wide or more. Whether a small tree or large shrub, it usually has an irregular and open form with a rounded crown.


COLOR – Very early leaves emerge in spring followed by showy, profuse red flowers in early spring, following new leaves. The flowers are arranged on erect to

USDA Zones: 4-8

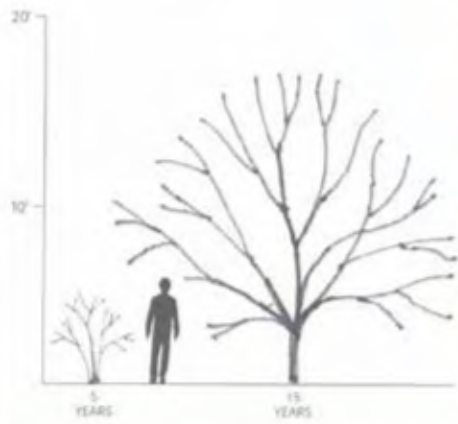
SUN	MOISTURE	pH
Full sun to part shade	Moist	5.5-7.5

drooping terminal panicles in clusters, 3"-6" long. The palmately compound leaves have five (seven) 3"-6" long leaflets plus a 2"-5" long petiole. The leaves can be very glossy green. They emerge bronze, turning to a medium to dark green above and pubescent gray below. Leaves drop early in autumn, often by September, with no appreciable autumn coloration.

TEXTURE – Medium coarse summer and winter.



The showy, profuse, early-spring flowers of red buckeye.



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ESSENTIAL NATIVE TREES AND SHRUBS