

Quercus bicolor

SwampWhite Oak

Zone: 4-8

Height: 50'-60'

Width: 50'

Crown: Round to oval

Growth: Moderate

Soil: Loam, sand, clay

pH: Acid, slightly alkaline

Drought: Moderate

Drainage: Extended flooding ok

Breakage: Resistant



Native to the upper Midwest, Swamp White Oak is found wild along streams and swampy ground. It is long lived, up to 300 years, so the trunks can be massive. The leaves of Swamp White are dark green shiny, only slightly indented and turn brown in fall. They hang on the tree for much of the winter, dropping twenty or thirty every day so you will always have some raking to do. Thick bark on old trees is deeply furrowed. In the West, we have trouble growing Swamp White Oak. The trunk does not develop fast enough to hold up the canopy in the optimum growth conditions in nurseries. We have seen 3" caliper trees arch over and lay their tops on the ground after a wind storm.

It is advisable to keep the top pruned back heavily while the tree is in the nursery. Also, lower lateral branching should be encouraged. This will help to build caliper. During the first two or three years, a flexible fiberglass stake would be better than a rigid bamboo or steel. Robinson Nursery offers Swamp White as branched and whip trees, as well as #3 Grow Ready™ liners.

