

Carpinus caroliniana American Hornbeam, Blue Beech, Musclewood

Zone: 3-9

Height: 20'-30'

Width: 20'-30'



Crown: Oval
Growth Rate: Slow
Soil: Clay, loam, sand
Drainage: Occasionally wet to well drained
Salt: Poor tolerance



Photo: Mike Yanny

Carpinus caroliniana is one of the finest trees available in the trade, and should be used more in the landscape industry. While a nice, adaptable small tree, it has two main features: the splendid fall color and the interesting bark. Fall color is usually orange red. The bark is gray and looks like a muscular arm, therefore the name. In full sun the tree grows compactly, and in shade, it has an open structure. Fall color, hardiness and vigor can range in native populations. Robinson Nursery is growing plants originating from Mike Yanny, of Johnson's Nursery in Wisconsin. His breeding program has developed a hardy, vigorous tree with excellent fall color. Robinson Nursery offers Carpinus caroliniana as branched trees.