



The Value of Trees

We have all heard the saying, “Give a man a fish, feed him for a day; teach a man to fish, feed him for a lifetime.” With all due respect to Lao Tzu, I’d like to offer this metaphor:

Fill a garden with annuals and perennials, create a garden for the season; plant a garden with trees; create a garden for the ages.

Most people think about flowers first when planning a landscape, but trees should be their first consideration. Because they are the largest plants in the landscape, they will have the greatest visual impact.

As they mature, trees give a garden unique character and structure. If you imagine your landscape as a house, the trees form the walls and ceiling. Whether evergreen or deciduous, their presence remains even when winter has forced other plants to retreat.

Trees provide shelter from sun and wind giving gardeners the chance to grow a wider variety of plants. They impede the sun’s rays creating a habitat for

shade-loving plants. Without the trees, you couldn’t grow hostas, and I can’t imagine a garden without hostas! Plants that need shielding from wind exist happily with their protection. Many ferns look lush and tropical under the shelter of trees; without them, they look worn and tattered.

So, from a design standpoint, trees are a must for a beautiful landscape. But there are more reasons why trees are valuable.



Imagine this landscape without trees.

Economic Benefits

With declining home values, trees are especially significant. A mature tree in a landscape has an appraised value of \$1,000 to \$10,000 according to the Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers. And Management Information Systems reports, “Landscaping, especially with trees, can increase property values as much as 20%.”

Trees that shade south and west walls and windows of a home reduce the cost of air conditioning in the summer. Evergreen trees planted to block cold winter winds shrink heating bills in winter.

Environmental Benefits

Trees reduce runoff in two ways. Their foliage interrupts falling raindrops, slows their descent, and reduces their impact on the soil below. Their roots hold the soil so groundwater can be replenished and soil, along with chemicals, is not washed into streams.

While trees don’t significantly reduce noise, the movement of their branches and leaves offer a pleasant, distracting ‘white noise’.

Think of trees as the lungs of the planet. They give off oxygen and remove carbon dioxide from the air helping to fight global warming. According to the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, “One acre of forest absorbs six tons of carbon dioxide and puts out four tons of oxygen - enough to meet the annual needs of 18 people.”

Wildlife Benefits

Trees, in general, provide nesting habitats, shelter from the

elements, and escape cover from and Human Health Lab at Realizing the value of trees is predators. Many flowering trees University of Illinois has shown significant, but the action we take provide food for songbirds. There that symptoms of children's is critical. Let's all plant at least are trees with delectable fruit that ADHD can be reduced when kids one tree on Arbor Day - for birds relish and eat early; and perform activities in green ourselves and our children, for there are trees with less settings. the birds, and for our planet.

appealing fruit that serves as emergency food in late winter And lab research done by when birds are hungry and less Dr. Roger S. Ulrich of Texas A&M finicky. University has shown that visual

Health Benefits

We need trees for our own good from stress within five minutes, health. We all recognize the as indicated by changes in blood healthful benefits when we eat pressure and muscle tension. the fruits and nuts grown on When I've had a rough day, the trees. Herbalists rely on many first thing I do when I get home is species of trees to make herbal take a short walk through my medicines. But there is research garden. My family benefits as to suggest many other benefits. much as I do!

Research done at the Landscape

