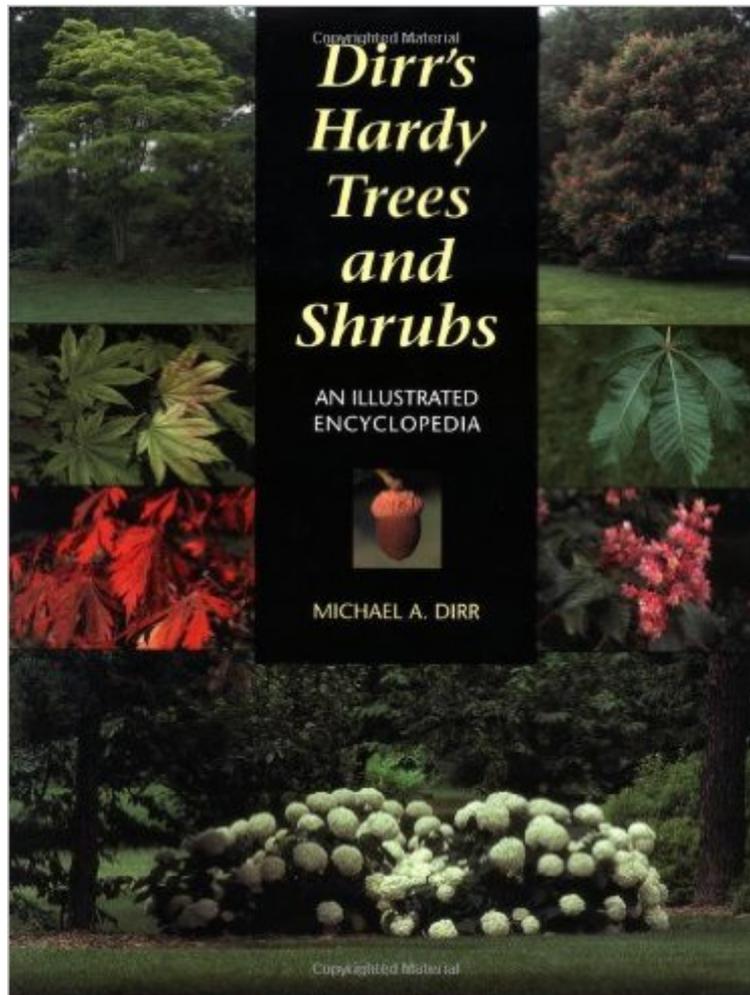


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# Dirr's Hardy Trees And Shrubs: An Illustrated Encyclopedia



## Synopsis

This bestselling encyclopedia, illustrated with brilliant photographs, describes the best woody plants adapted to cooler climates, showing both habit and details of more than 500 species, and including some 700 additional cultivars and varieties. Brief cultural information is supplied for each plant, as well as Dirr's perceptive comments and opinions.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is possibly the most useful book on trees for the non-specialist in existence (though any arborist or landscape designer worth their salt should, and probably does, have it). Here's why. Alone among books on trees, Dirr provides not only descriptions of the trees, but he offers landscaping assessments. And he is not faint of heart. If he doesn't like a tree, he'll tell you. For example, of the Poplar, he famously wrote, "I have never recommended a Poplar to anyone, at least while conscious." Of the Common Ninebark he comments, "an extremely adaptable plant, perhaps even to nuclear attacks, and once established, requires a bulldozer for removal." But it is when Dirr waxes lyrical about a tree that he loves that he achieves his apotheosis. He introduces one tree with this simple sentence: "I love this tree." He describes a beech forest as "one of the most awe inspiring sight in nature." The Silver Linden is the "Beauty Queen" among Lindens. Of the Maackii Amurensis he writes, "Unheralded and unknown, except in the gardens of the fortunate few." Based on THAT comment, and the pictures of this extraordinary tree, I set out to find one. It took some doing. Now I have an allee of them that was planted 5 years ago. Every time I stroll past them, I

thank god for Michael Dirr. I also discovered the *Metasequoia Glyptostrobooides* (Dawn Redwood) here. If anyone reading this can lay their hands on this tree and has room for it - GET IT. Among other extremely useful features are the tree lists included in the back. He has listed trees by size, fruit, flower - you name it. The index lists trees both by their botanical name and their common name. I can not begin to tell you how useful his evaluations are. I have a farm -- 150 acres. And bit by bit I am filling it with trees -- with Dirr's help. Without him I would be lost.

I love to design with plants. If I don't know a particular plant, this photographic reference is very helpful. This book is full of great information but there is not room for photos of all the different cultivars and the characteristics of the same. I prefer to use this book as a secondary reference to Dirr's *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants*. The Manual lists most all the cultivars available and the growing characteristics of each, but no color photos (at least not in the 4th edition). The *Illustrated Encyclopedia* has wonderful photos but not enough plant info. To someone experienced with woody plants, this picture book is just not enough info to really know what to expect from a plant. Get it, but also have the Manual alongside.

I am not a professional landscape designer, but wanted a reference to help choose trees and shrubs for a small space. This book provides both beautiful photos of mature specimens as well as the relevant information on plant habit & culture. I highly recommend this as a companion to the excellent "*Manual of Woody Landscape Plants*", also by Dirr. Together, these two make up the most useful (by far) of the general books on trees & shrubs I have found.

The book is invaluable to the experienced nursery person and is also extraordinarily interesting to the home gardener. As a landscape designer, I could not exist without it as a reference. It's written (and photographed) by someone who's "been there, seen that" in heartfelt, knowledge-packed language. I would suggest two changes to the author and publisher: If the "critical data/information"--zones, maturity height, etc.--were treated in smaller type (i.e., set off from the editorial text), there would be more space for Dirr's wonderful insights on each plant. Also, since I'm fairly new at Latin terminology, a phonetic descriptor for each of the Latin names, small and underneath each, would be very helpful. This book could easily be priced (higher), and I bet it would sell just as many. I'd still buy it.

Dirr has made an beautiful color encyclopedia of landscape-useful trees and shrubs. This book is

more friendly to the amateur gardener than his previous gigantic reference book and has the added advantage of color photos. All of the expected plants are included as well as a large number of less common species and cultivars, but this book does not attempt to be an exhaustive reference like his earlier work. I am certain that a horticulturist would find a few glaring omissions, but I couldn't. The photos are the reason to buy the book, but the writing is also worth reading. Dirr conveys particulars about the plant as well as his opinions with humor and an intent to educate.

As a Master Gardener, but a novice at designing, I find this book to be an invaluable source of information. While many such books only show the features (flowers, leaf color) of a plant, Dirr has taken care to show the entire specimen, showing the shape and texture of mature trees and shrubs. It's a pleasure to read his descriptions (and opinions), which are written in plain but colorful language.

This book is a priceless addition to the gardeners/landscapers library for various reasons. The write-ups say much with few words...they're even very humorous at times. The pictures are marvellous...giving the reader a good look at several varieties..often those he recommends most. The quality of the paper and binding is also good..I've had this book for a couple of years ...hauling it around everywhere, it's stood up to much abuse. Most importantly.. Mr. Dirr's knowledge in this field get's top marks...& it will help the novice & veteran alike. This book comes highly recommended from an aspiring Garden/Landscape Designer who depends on it more than any other source for accurate tree/shrub information. Will soon be investing in his other books as well.

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