

GARDENS Four Seasons

GARDENDESIGN
July/August/September 2020

COLUMNAR TREES



*So many of us are realizing this even more
since March of this year!*

I dedicate this edition of **GARDENDESIGN** to my beautiful MOM - June Corrine (Campbell) Balcaen. My world experienced a huge loss when she passed away at 92 in late May of this year.



Always my biggest fan & supporter - she never seemed to tire of me chattering away about plants & design endeavours. When I was a kid, she liked plants but never

had much time to garden as she was busy raising a family of 6. Mom really took to gardening after we all left the nest. She'd buy the last-of-the-season pots of trees or shrubs at bargain prices & would take great pride in watering & coaxing the most weak & bedraggled into a thriving plant, even if it took years. She loved gardening her own way - getting sheer enjoyment out of seeing things bloom & thrive.

Roses were her favourite & with each spring I plant one to remind me how lucky I was to have called this gentle, loving, kind, incredible woman my Mom!

COLUMNAR TREES

So here we all are together in the world - at the end of an incredible Summer getting ready to see what Autumn holds.

I have never seen such a remarkable increase in the interest of Nature, Gardening & Plants - one of the silver linings of our past 6 months of the pandemic. Nurseries sold out of stock in record time because people found increasingly, solace in being out of doors enjoying Mother Nature, particularly in their own yards or public parks.

I think it wonderful as we are seeing this phenomenon more & more & do believe if **“We look after the Earth - She will look after Us”**

One of the ways Nature looks after us is the ability of plants to change & adapt to their surroundings. One example of this is, with a little help from Man, we now are able to enjoy a larger selection of Columnar Trees - versions of their close cousins - the full size Trees!

Properties have grown progressively smaller over the years & to address this lack of space & the desire to still use preferred trees - the nursery industry introduces new varieties derived from our favourites. Love the look of a Blue Spruce but don't have space for a full size specimen ? - then the Columnar Blue Spruce is the answer for you! Have you always admired the beauty of the Mountain Ash as it goes thru' the seasons but can't afford the space it takes up? Columnar Mountain Ash is just the ticket!

Here are the most common new varieties of Columnar Trees that are easily available from local nurseries (albeit most not until next Spring!) Check them out & think of how they might satisfy your yearnings, add some privacy & definition, seasonal interest & colour in your world!

CONIFERS

My favourite tree is Scots Pine but since there are no upright, slim ones available locally just yet I satisfied my lust for one with a **COLUMNAR MUGHO PINE**. At a mature size of just 12' high & 4' wide - this fits beautifully into my small city lot.



- btw this is NOT my yard tho' one can always wish for an exquisite Boffin's Garden!



Next, the **COLUMNAR WHITE SPRUCE** (Norway Spruce) reaches its zenith at 20' & 6' spread!

Continuing with the Spruce Trees - here we have a bushy **COLUMNAR BLUE SPRUCE** - the exact same size & preferred growing conditions as the White Spruce. They offer an outstanding foliage contrast as you can tell!



Junipers have their own 'skinny' collection to choose from. The thinnest is the **SKYROCKET JUNIPER** towering at maturity 15' with a mere 2' spread! Similiar to the Spruce & Pines - they offer year 'round greenery.



COLOGREEN JUNIPER & MEDORA JUNIPER are not quite as tall peaking at 10' but are wider at a 4' base. The former provides a deep hunter green foliage, while the latter presents itself as a rich blue-green. Impressive oui?!



Ubiquitous Pyramidal Cedar has been fine tuned to feature better characteristics while losing some undesirable traits. The older BRANDON CEDAR can crest up to 25'-30' with an average base of 4'-6'.

12' is how high the newer **HOLMSTRUP, SMARAGD & EMERALD CEDAR** mature & they spread out around 4'-5'. **SKYBOUND CEDAR** reaches the same height but can more easily fit into tight spaces - just a 3' diameter bottom.

(see **PLANT of the MOMENT** further down for another cool Cedar choice)



Next onto the lissom **DECIDUOUS** Selections

This saucy, burgundy hued **ROYAL SPIRE**
CRABAPPLE gives those wanting a Spring bloom along with
ornamental red fruit later in the season a delightful choice as it
only grows to 15' & takes up ultimately a 6' circle. First Rate!



The **GLADIATOR CRAB** (I get a kick outta these names!!) has deeper burgundy leaves but the same great showy fruit. A tad wider at 8' they reach the same height as Royal Spire tho'.



& for real good fresh fruit eating - you simply can't best the **NORTHERN TREASURED ARROW COLUMNAR APPLE!** I've been told they crest at 15' & an unbelievable 2' spread. Mine is about 3 years old & should be producing full size apples similiar in taste to a Honey Crisp soon - can hardly wait! (oh Summer 2021 - only 6 more months to go!)



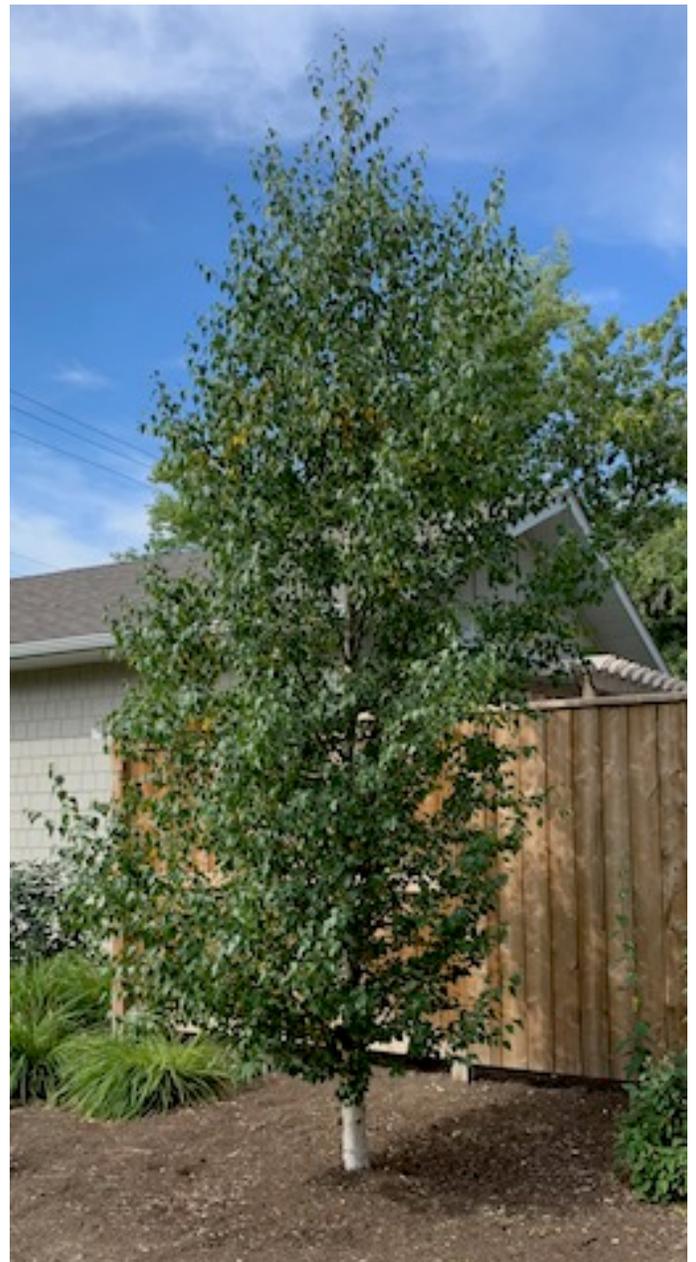


TOWER POPLAR, SWEDISH ASPEN & PRAIRIE SKYRISE TREMBLING ASPEN have been around awhile as tall, narrow trees. With a 30'- 35' height & a maximum spread of 4'- 6' they are easy to fit into landscapes - just beware of the rather large POPLAR root system!

A couple of new introductions in the Birch family can be planted in an average city property with little concern for the space they may ultimately take up when mature. Just lay your eyes on the heavenly Fall colour!



DAKOTA PINNACLE - 30'
pinnacle & a 12' spread



PARKLAND PILLAR - 30' high
with only a 6' breadth



& as if there weren't enough tall, slender specimens to choose from - here we have the **FASTIGIATE MOUNTAIN ASH** at a 30' mature rise & just a 10' spread. (yeah - I had to look up how to pronounce THAT one :)

Don't let the fact this specimen is of the Caragana Variety. **SUTHERLAND CARAGANA - SILVER SPIRES** is true to its heritage - very hardy & easy to grow to a 30' height & a mere 5' span. Pretty bronze coloured bark & the striking shape add to the strong visual appeal.



If super-size Pussy Willows about the size of your thumb each Spring are your thing - then this POLAR BEAR PUSSY WILLOW won't disappoint! It only reaches 15' & is a little bushier than most narrow trees at an 8' span. Furry, silvery leaves appear as the catkins disappear - just as tactile & a great contrast to pretty much any other colour foliage.



SO that completes our look at COLUMNAR TREES. All mentioned in this array are sun loving (or at least part sun except the Cedar - they prefer shade to semi-shade but will tolerate full sun.) All Specimens will do well in our 2b or 3 zone.

I'm sure you can a spot for one in your own little piece of paradise!

Guess What !? I have switched my **LANDSCAPE DESIGN CLASSES** to strictly **ONLINE via ZOOM!**

They begin Sept. 28 , 2020 - now available anywhere in ALBERTA, SASKATCHEWAN & MANITOBA -

- City Lots
- Farms
- Acreages



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GARDENS
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AUTUMN 2020 START DATES:
Mon. Sept. 28 10am-noon or 6:30-8:30pm
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\$349 Saskatoon yards (\$369 yards outside Saskatoon)
Contact Denise @ 306-244-0049
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PLANT OF THE MOMENT

GOLD SPIRE CEDAR

Thuja 'Gold Spire'

Pyramid Cedars - one of the first svelte trees developed for retail are commonly seen because of their many fine traits. But then comes along some Cedar youngblood to shake things up - the yummy **GOLD SPIRE CEDAR!**





At maturity it reaches 12'-15' & has a span of only 4'. An amazing colour & texture contrast to pretty much any landscape - it'll jump out at you noticeably & sets off silver, green, blue green & particularly burgundy foliage.

Loves the shade & semi-shade but needs a bit of protection in the full sun until established. Hardy in SK & easy to grow. Just remember Cedars are bog loving plants & do best when planted in super organic soil with plenty of moisture. Excellent for a low spot in your yard!



DESIGN BRILLIANCE

Driving north on Spadina earlier this Summer I saw a rather amazing sight! I had previously taken note of this front yard as it had been ingeniously planned to resemble a sand dune at the beach. Very fitting for a property directly facing the South SK river!





What I had thought were all types of grasses in the planting scheme turned out to be a large amount of Siberian Iris & they were in full bloom creating a stunning vista!

Bravo to whoever is responsible for this idea!



DENISE'S BEFORE & AFTERS

BEFORE - a client's dream starting out as a mucky, cluttered construction site soon was transformed.....



.....into this tranquil **AFTER** setting!

I took this long narrow view & broke it up visually by leading the eye back & forth along the undulating bed borders, the movement of tall grasses & up along the existing mature tree which was included in the bed to boot!

No maintenance issues here - a narrow, smooth strip does double duty as the bed border & mowing strip!



GARDENDESIGN for October/November/
December will be called **AUTUMN**
GARDENDESIGN because - hey - I am **GARDENS**
Four Seasons after all & I am publishing 4 times a year - once
each season - so it only makes *sense* (& I like to make sense on
occasion :)

The topic will be one I get questioned about all the time -
STEPS to CARRY OUT your
LANDSCAPE PLAN
- NEW or EXISTING YARDS!

I have numerous **GARDENDESIGN BACK ISSUES** of
on various topics - if you would like to read up on something -
I've likely covered it. Shoot me a request *OR* you can start by
requesting these topics:

- CONTEMPORARY MINIMALISTIC STYLE

- SEASONAL DISPLAYS

- WATER WHISPERS

Check out any of my online bits & you will get updates as I marvel thru' the world of Landscape Design!

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