

American Elm (*Ulmus americana*)

This Florida native tree grows quickly when young, forming a broad or upright, vase-shaped silhouette, 80 to 100 feet high and 60 to 120 feet wide. Trunks on older trees could reach to seven feet across.

The leaves are dark green throughout the year, fading to yellow before dropping in fall (pictured). In early spring, before the new leaves unfold, small, green flowers appear on hanging stalks. These blooms are followed by green, wafer-like seedpods which are quite popular with both birds and wildlife.

Once a very popular and long-lived (300+ years) shade and street tree, American Elm suffered a dramatic decline with the introduction of Dutch elm disease, a fungus spread by a bark beetle.



The wood of American Elm is very hard and was a valuable timber tree used for lumber, furniture and veneer. The Indians once made canoes out of American Elm trunks, and early settlers would steam the wood so it could be bent to make barrels and wheel hoops. It was also used for the rockers on rocking chairs. Today, the wood is used mainly for making furniture.

American Elm should be grown in full sun on well-drained, rich soil, and monitored for symptoms of Dutch Elm disease.

Information Source:

Gilman, E. F. and Watson, D.G. (1993). *Ulmus americana: American Elm*. University of Florida.
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/st649>

Photos by: Alicia Lamborn