

CENTENNIAL PARKS IN THE FALL

# Nature put on a brilliant show this year



By Kathryn Stocks

The trees in our neighbourhood have been resplendent this autumn, their colours so bright it's as if they were lit from within. The red hues were particularly stunning in October with the red maples leading the pack early. Other trees quickly caught up with shades that ranged from golden yellow to blazing orange to bright red to deep burgundy. It was quite the palette.

The conditions for a glorious fall were perfect because we had just the right amount of early cool temperatures to start the colour change. That was followed by a long stretch of sunny, dry weather through October to create the most vibrant colours. It also helped that there has been little wind to take the leaves off the trees.

It was all too pretty to resist, so like many

people we took out our cameras and headed to our parks to try to capture a piece of them.

We hope everyone was able to take the time to enjoy the trees in our yards, on our streets, in our parks and across the province this fall. They sure put on a good show.

As *Anne of Green Gables* author L.M. Montgomery put it: "I'm so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers."



**Colonel Danforth Park:** Like every other ravine in Toronto, Colonel Danforth Park glowed with amazing colour in October. The light green willows close to the river add a nice contrast for the blazing maples and other trees behind them.

## Free trees for your boulevard

Toronto offers free trees to homeowners, landowners and not-for-profit organizations to expand the urban forest and reach the city's 40 percent canopy cover target, which will help tackle climate change. The Street Tree Planting Program is free, and other grants and incentives are also available.

Any property owner can submit a tree planting request for the city-owned road allowance in front of their home or business through a request to 311. City staff will visit the site to see if there is adequate space to plant a tree, and determine the right tree species and the ideal planting location.

The street tree brochure includes trees the city typically offers in residential areas. These

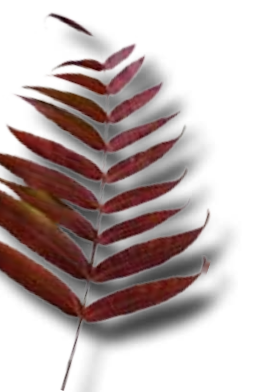
include 15 native trees, seven hybrids and cultivars, and eight trees that are native to Europe and Asia. The city offers this range of trees and cultivars to increase chances of survivability in some of the more challenging conditions while also providing a diversity of species.

Planting trees in urban conditions presents challenges as a result of overhead and underground utilities, space and soil conditions. Some of these challenges do not present optimal conditions for native trees but Urban Forestry encourages the planting of native species whenever possible.

We encourage anyone without a tree on their boulevard to apply for one with a request to 311. For more information, visit [toronto.ca/trees](http://toronto.ca/trees)



**Waterfront Park:** The deep burgundy shades of this ash add a different tone down by the lake. The iNaturalist app identifies it as a white ash. In autumn the leaves range from orange-yellow to purplish-red.



**Centennial Park:** The golden hue of the black walnut tree in autumn is a common sight here in Centennial. It prefers moist soil and sun and grows up to 30 metres tall. The squirrels love it for the round green walnuts it produces.

**Wanita Park:** The staghorn sumac is a shrub or small tree that can spread rampantly. Native to Eastern North America, sumacs turn a wonderful red colour in the fall. There are lots of them along our waterfront trail.

**Adams Park:** Sugar maples add magnificent colour to the landscape. In the fall, the leaves of this well-known tree that graces our flag turn yellow, brilliant orange or red. Sugar maples can grow up to 35 metres tall and can live for more than 200 years.