Quercus rubra is a large shade tree that thrives in dry sites, often with good brick-red autumn color, becoming very rounded to spreading with age. Northern Red Oak is probably the most common landscape Oak of the Midwest.

**FEATURES**

**Form**
- large shade tree
- maturing at about 60' tall x 80' wide under urban conditions, but much larger in the wild
- upright oval growth habit in youth, becoming rounded to spreading with age
- medium growth rate

**Culture**
- full sun to partial sun (partial shade tolerant in youth)
- performs best in full sun in moist, deep, acidic, well-drained soils, but is very adaptable to poor soils, dry soils, and soils of various pH
- propagated by seeds
- no serious diseases or pests
- commonly available in the trade
- member of the Red Oak group; some of these members may hybridize freely in the wild, resulting in a blending of traits such as leaf shape and fruit size

**Foliage**
- shiny dark green, alternate, with an overall shape that is obovate and about 7" long, with 7-11 prominent bristle-tipped lobes (identifying it as belonging to the Red Oak group), with each lobe incised and with a deep sinus on each side, having a 1.5" long petiole that turns a distinctive yellow or red by mid-summer
- autumn color is usually brick red to scarlet and very attractive (but may on occasion be brown-red to yellowish-brown in poor years)

**Flowers**
- yellow-brown pendulous male catkins are obvious and prominent in late Apr., but are ornamentally insignificant, as are the very small pistillate flowers

**Fruits**
- a relatively large oval acorn (1" long)

that matures over 2 seasons, with a wide cap that covers the upper one-fourth of the nut, on a very short peduncle and either single or in pairs, but clustered on the second-year wood and often with a heavy mast crop (abundant fruit production)

**Twigs**
- greenish to reddish-brown, turning gray by the second year and somewhat stout

**Trunk**
- dark gray to black, being lightly furrowed with flat-topped subtle ridges through middle age, and becoming deeply furrowed with a light reddish interior bark in old age
- branches arising directly from the trunk are relatively few, but large, adding to the bold texture by their size, and by exposing the large trunk more than most Oaks

**USAGE**

**Function**
- shade tree for large lawns, parks, golf courses, corporate centers, or naturalized areas
- valuable timber tree, with its wood prized for beams, boards, railroad ties, and furniture

**Texture**
- bold texture in foliage and when bare
- average density in foliage but open when bare

**Assets**
- one of the most rapidly growing and vigorous Oaks
- good brick-red autumn color
- the most bold-textured member of the Red Oak group
- urban tolerant in general, especially to dry sites
- one of the best Oaks for transplant success
- abundant nuts attract wildlife (large birds, deer, and especially squirrels)

**Liabilities**
- fruit litter with maturity

**Habitat**
- Zones 5 to 8
- Native to the Eastern half of the U.S.

**SELECTIONS**

**Alternates**
- large shade trees (*Acer saccharum*, *Fagus sylvatica*, *Liriodendron tulipifera*, *Quercus shumardii*, *Zelkova serrata*, etc.)
- trees for dry sites (*Celtis occidentalis*, *Gleditsia triacanthos*, *Fraxinus pennsylvanica*, *Quercus alba*, *Quercus macrocarpa*, etc.)

**Variants**
- straight species is the available form