

Trees suited for Hammil (North Owens) Valley

Based on: Soil type, Climate, Seasonal Temperatures, Wind

Must be able to tolerate alkaline soils, both high heat and below freezing temperatures, drought tolerant, and high winds.

Trees for Cooling/Shade and Trees for Warmth/Wind breaks- a partial list

Cooling Trees: idea is for a tall stable tree with large canopy for shading. Need to consider location regarding any leaves/fruit/pod dropping messes; lateral root system that may disrupt nearby pathways, driveways, decks, etc. Consider deciduous trees that allow winter sunshine to hit the house when leaves drop.

Catalpa- flowers in spring, has pods that remain on tree. Deep water 1x every 2 weeks. Large leaves may tatter if in direct wind.

Mulberry- moderate water, tolerates heat and alkaline soils. May need pruning for shape. The fruiting variety can be very messy so place away from decks, parking, concrete, etc.

Mimosa or Silk Tree- Hummingbirds love this tree. Late to flower.

Honey Locust- tolerates alkaline soils, low to moderate water. Roots travel. Low to moderate flowering, has pods, bees love this tree. Some varieties have thorns. Pests may be a problem.

Modesto Ash- heat tolerant, moderate water. Prune annually first few years to create strong branching structure.

Desert Willow- much better choice than Weeping Willow for drought tolerance.

Smoke Tree- tolerates poor rocky soil, low to moderate water. Smaller tree 25' at maturity.

Northern Red Oak- do not overwater, prone to root rot in wet soils; deep water every 10-14 days

Chinese Pistache- medium tree, can get large; good longevity. Dioecious (male or female tree).

Golden Rain Tree- grows about 30 x 30 ft at maturity. Water every 7-10 days.

Tulip tree- deep watering once/week during hot summer months. This keeps the large roots from surfacing. Thus needs to be watered independent of lawn turf.

London Plane Tree- has spiny 1 inch dry globes; should be 25-30 ft from concrete so large roots don't crack concrete or pipes.

Shantung Maple- prefers slightly acidic soil, thus may need sulfur but can tolerate alkaline soils. Smaller tree. As with all maples avoid pruning in spring as they "bleed" a lot of sap.

Chaste Tree- really a shrub. Cultivars vary up to 10 ft. Tolerates salt. Purple flowers. "Marginally hardy" tops may die back in cold winters, best to plant in sheltered area from wind chill or off valley floor.

Plum or Cherry Trees- Prunus species; may be susceptible to pests and disease. Pruning in first few years to remove suckers and encourage strong branching is recommended. Purple leaf plum does well.

Pear Trees- both fruiting and non-fruiting do well here but needs water every 7-10 days.

Apple Trees- very tolerant to multiple conditions here. Water deeply once/week during fruit set. Some pruning recommended for strong branching and fruit set. May need annual spraying. Favorite of Coddling Moths as are Pear Trees.

Crabapples- light pruning for shape; valuable food source for wildlife.

Cottonwoods- part of Poplar species; Fast growing but may have weak brittle branching hazardous in high winds, potential to do structural damage from roots, have twig/bundle litter.

Warming Trees: idea is to provide a windbreak from seasonal chilling and cold winds. Evergreens usually are best choices. A bonus is they provide shelter for birds and wildlife. Can plant in a single row, or multiple rows like a forest. This could combine faster growing but possibly shorter lived trees and the slower growing trees. Can be a fire hazard so should be planted at least 30 feet from house. May require iron supplementation or sulfur addition to acidify the soil. Recommendations are 8# Sulphur/1000 sq.ft. Can be split into 2 applications.

Pines- Italian stone pines are heat tolerant. Pinyon pines are very sappy and do not tolerate landscape irrigation.

Spruce- Norway spruce is hardy and wind resistant. Cones can be 4-7 inches.

Junipers- size depends on type. Spartan junipers pictured on board ~ 15 ft tall, 14 yrs old.

Cedars- Incense cedar tolerates heat and poor soils. Drought tolerant. Can be highly flammable.

Sequoia- Giant sequoia should consider placement as this will get HUGE.

Resources: UCCE Cooperative Extension.Org: "Choosing the Best Landscape Trees for Home Energy Conservation"; Canopy.Org; University of Nevada Cooperative Extension: "Choosing the Right Plants for the Eastern Sierra's High Fire Hazard Areas"; Inyo/Mono Master Gardeners Tree Walk