

Ulmus Emerald Sunshine

This heat-tolerant elm is well-suited to urban landscapes

Elms are terrific landscape trees. They're stately, long lived and relatively fast growing.

However, the genus has had its ups and downs.

Dutch elm disease was a disaster to the nation's American elm population. As a result, many in commerce shied away from all elms.

But *Ulmus* is making a comeback. New *U. americana* are being introduced, including 'New Harmony' and 'Valley Forge' with resistance to Dutch elm disease. So American elm is poised to be a great American street tree once again.

Lacebark elms, *U. parvifolia*, have become very popular of late with the introductions of many new cultivars. 'Emerald Prairie,' Allée, Athena Classic, Bosque and Everclear offer a variety of shapes and forms.

But *Ulmus* has a lot more to offer.

On the hunt

Steve Bieberich has been searching for outstanding elms for most of his life. At the trial gardens of his company, Sunshine Nursery in



Emerald Sunshine has a vase shape and is well-suited to tough, urban conditions.

It reaches 25-30 feet high and develops an attractive vase shape with maturity. This is a perfect size for many landscape applications.

The tree also exhibits good tolerance to tough urban conditions, so it's a good candidate for street-tree applications. High pH and compacted soils don't seem to be a problem for *U. propinqua*.

Chinese tough

Emerald Sunshine originated from seed collected by Bieberich in China. It has shown excellent resistance to heat on the western plains of Oklahoma. The constant dry winds of summer aren't a problem, though many tree species would show signs of desiccation.

The tree has also shown good resistance to elm leaf beetle and phloem necrosis, another common malady of elm trees.

◆ **For more:** Sunshine Nursery, (580) 323-6259; www.sunshinenursery.com. J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co., (800) 825-8202, www.jfschmidt.com.

— Todd Davis



Photo courtesy of J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co.

Emerald Sunshine has large, shiny foliage that's highly tolerant to heat and drought.

Clinton, Okla., he has more than 30 Asian elm species under evaluation.

He monitors for traits including resistance to elm leaf beetle and Dutch elm disease. One tree in the trial has proven a terrific performer with great heat and drought tolerance.

U. propinqua Emerald Sunshine ('JFS-Bieberich') is being released through J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co. in Boring, Ore.

Like lacebark elm, *U. propinqua* also has beautiful bark. Its common name is chalkbark elm, and this species exhibits corky-textured bark.

specifics

Name: *Ulmus propinqua* 'JFS-Bieberich'

Trademark name: Emerald Sunshine.

Description: Shade tree reaching 30 feet high and 25 feet wide with a vase outline. Foliage is deep green, shiny and highly heat resistance. Fall color is dull yellow.

Hardiness: USDA Hardiness Zone 5.