

AUTUMN COLOURS AT WESPELAAR ARBORETUM



1 - An aerial view of the Arboretum towards the east, captures the glory of autumn colours on *Liquidambar*, *Carya*, *Nyssa* and maples. In the distance, the Artois Pavilion hides a good *Nyssa sylvatica* 'Wisley Bonfire' which deserves its fiery cultivar name.



2 - *Liquidambar styraciflua* 'Lane Roberts' is one of the oldest trees planted in the Arboretum. It has a generous rounded shape and glorious colours every year. On the right of the picture, *Nyssa sylvatica* 'Sheffield Park', one of the best of the older selections, is starting to colour.



3 - The oak woodland of the Marnef Wood was planted in the 1880's. After thinning and selection of the best trees (*Quercus robur*), this cathedral like site has welcomed collections of maples and other shrubs which enjoy the shade of the woodland.



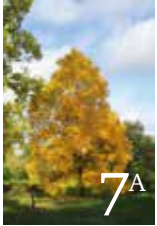
4 - Japanese maples have been cultivated and improved over centuries by Japanese horticulturists. *Acer palmatum* has seen hundreds of cultivars selected and named; all kind of shapes and colours are available today. *Acer palmatum* 'Samidare' (4a, 4b) is a golden form whereas 'Orangeola' (4c) is a deep purple, cut leaf, weeping form. *Acer palmatum* 'Inazuma' (4d) is more typical of a purple leaved selection of *Acer palmatum*.



5 - The samaras of the Japanese maples contribute to the autumn show here on *Acer palmatum* 'Emperor 1' (5a). This Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*, 5b) was raised from seed collected in Rice Sanctuary, Massachusetts in 1997. It has developed into an amazing fastigate plant.



6 - *Acer buergerianum* (6a) has reached us from China. Its triangular leaf has earned him the name of trident maple. It is a well-known and effective candidate for the bonsai collection (6b), an elegant Japanese form of horticultural art.



7 - *Carya glabra* (7a) is one of the best hickories for autumn colour. It belongs to the walnut family, but it does not have the edible nuts of a Pecan (*Carya illinoensis*). This beautiful *Fraxinus americana* 'Bash Bish Falls' (7b) was collected in Western Massachusetts. Unfortunately, it colours too early in the season and may disappoint the late visitor to our autumn show.



8 - Maples are not the only trees to show good colours; *Ginkgo biloba* 'Autumn Gold' (8a) is well named. The Cherry birch (*Betula lenta*, 8b) lightens up this conifer plantation. The rare *Ulmus lamellosa* (8c) has reached us from China. Fortunately, it has not (yet) been hit by the elm disease. *Cotinus obovatus* (8d) is only a shrub but it is unmistakably brilliant in the garden.



9 - Autumn is also the normal time for fruiting and *Phellodendron amurense* var. *lavalleei* (9a) is no exception. It is well known for its corky bark. *Liriodendron* 'Chapel Hill' (9b) is a wonderful hybrid between the American (*L. tulipifera*) and Chinese (*L. chinense*) tulip trees. It will have deep golden flowers and later in the season this typical aggregate of fruits.



10 - This *Zelkova serrata* (10a) was born from a fruit collected at Kalmthout Arboretum in 1968. It colours early, well before other plants around it. *Pseudolarix amabilis* (10b) is a rare conifer from China; it prefers a warmer climate and remains a low, broad-branched tree in our maritime climate. *Nyssa sylvatica* 'Herkenrode' (10c) is a very early colouring selection raised from a seed of a tree in bed 19 of the Geographical Arboretum at Tervuren. *Stewartia* x *henryae* (10d) is a hybrid between *S. pseudocamellia* and *S. monadelphica* and one of our best *Stewartia* for autumn colour.



11

11 - Early November and *Nyssa sylvatica* 'Sheffield Park' is now in full autumn glory; it may soon hide the church of Wespelaar. To the right, a small and weeping *Nyssa sylvatica* 'Autumn Cascades' is less impressive but might hopefully cascade one day all the way into the pond.



12^A



12^B

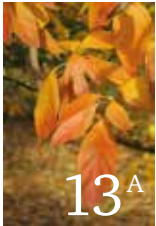
12 - American oaks are among the most colourful: a specimen of white oak (*Quercus alba* 'Laura', 12a) is here being admired by a delegation of the International Dendrology Society. This selection of scarlet oak (*Quercus coccinea* 'Splendens', 12b) is probably the best of all. *Quercus* 'Pondaim' (12c) is a hybrid of *Q. pontica* from Turkey with *Q. dentata* of Northeastern China, Korea and Northern Japan. It holds on to its leaves until spring. *Quercus serrata* 'Herkenrode' (12d) is a selection from a batch of seedlings collected in Northern Honshu in Japan, selected and raised at Wespelaar.



12^C



12^D



13^A



13^B

13 - *Sassafras albidum* (13a) is a dangerously suckering tree that should be planted in a meadow to be grazed by cattle or on a lawn that is regularly mowed. It has aromatic leaves that show great variation in shape: some are irregularly lobed, while others have no lobes at all. *Nyssa sylvatica* (13b) is less of a problem. Good colouring leaves will contrast with the unfortunately not very edible fruits.



14^A



14^B

14 - This big *Magnolia fraseri* (14a) from the Appalachian forests of Northeast America is much admired by our visitors. The fruits of this native species are modest but those of *Magnolia* 'Big Dude' (14b), a hybrid of *M. sprengeri* x *M. 'Picture'*, are massively fertile with up to a hundred seeds per infructescence every year.



15^A

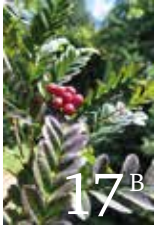


15^B

15 - The pomes of *Crataegus macracantha* (15a) contain several seeds and are eaten by birds throughout the winter. The fruits of *Carpinus japonica* (15b) are hidden under this conspicuous bell like set of triangular bracts.



16 - The fruits of *Asimina triloba* (16a), the Pawpaw of native American tribes, are just edible. It is best to have several trees growing together to encourage fertilisation. The extraordinary fruits of *Euonymus americanus* (16b) are its main interest: the pink capsule opens to show attractive orange seeds, later dispersed by birds. The cones of *Pseudolarix amabilis* (16c) will break up on the tree; every seed with its individual wing will then be dispersed by the wind. The small apples of *Malus* 'Evereste' (16d) are there for beauty.



17 - After its magnificent flowering, *Koelreuteria paniculata* (17a) will produce the curious lantern like capsules which will probably help the seed to float on rivers or be dispersed by wind. *Sorbus pseudovilmorinii* (17b), a small tree from Yunnan, Sichuan and neighbouring Vietnam, resembles our common Rowan; it will hold on to its fruit well into winter until birds have plucked them all.



18 - *Stewartia rostrata* (18a) is grown for its autumn colour and its camellia-like flower. The pointed spike on its capsule (a roster) justifies its name. The violet drupes of this *Callicarpa americana* hybrid (18b) provide for a good combination with its pink leaves, here further enhanced in the background, by the leaves of *Carya glabra*. *Franklinia alatamaha* (18c) only flowers in September. This eastern United States tree has disappeared in nature in the late 19th century. It has survived because it was planted in a garden in Philadelphia. *Clerodendrum trichotomum* (18d) is but a shrub but its fruiting remains very spectacular thanks to the pink sepals and blue drupes.



19 - Autumn is also the time for a show by our various native mushrooms: one of the most spectacular is the fly agaric (*Amanita muscaria*, 19a). Although very beautiful, like almost all *Amanita*, it is poisonous. *Armillaria ostoyae* (19b), a form of honey fungus, is edible when young. *Chlorophyllum rhacodes* (19c) is a saprophyte under our *Metasequoia*. The earth star (*Geastrum triplex*, 19d) opens up on the background of leaves and two fruits of *Disanthus cercidifolius*. That baby frog may have some difficulty getting through next winter.



20 - Early mist rises from the calm surface on the Artois Pond, an ideal mirror for the fountain. *Liquidambar styraciflua* 'Gum Ball', a rounded dwarf selection is starting to colour.