

# Tree Selection

## Which trees do we plant in today's city?

October 16  
2025

**Boomzorg**

 **BOOMKWEKERIJ  
UDENHOUT**

**Boom in Business**



[www.treeselection.nl](http://www.treeselection.nl)

# PROGRAM



Chair of the day

- 12:00**                    **Reception with lunch**
- 13:00**                    **Welcome**
- 13:10**                    **Henrik Sjöman:** *“Don’t choose urban trees by feeling, but by facts”*
- 13:45**                    **Andrew Hiron:** *“The CSR method – an ecological lens for tree choice”*
- 14:10**                    **Eduard Groen:** *“Biodiversity lists compared – there is no single truth”*
- 14:30**                    **Break**
- 15:00**                    **Henry Kuppen:** *“Do municipalities choose the snack bar method or the tree wheel of five?”*
- 15:35**                    **Patrick Bellan:** *“Diversity as the key to a sustainable urban tree stock in Malmö”*
- 16:05**                    **Jaap Smit:** *“Tree Hunters 2.0 present ten particularly valuable trees”*
- 16:30**                    **Tree Officers forum**
- 17:00**                    **Drinks**



TREE SELECTION

*Which trees do we plant in today's city? This choice is not only ecological, but also of great climatological, economic, and social importance. The reason for this focus is the growing need for clarity on the subject of TREE SELECTION. Although several selection lists are already in circulation – such as the Register of Leiden and the list of Stichting Natuur & Milieu – according to many tree managers these are one-sided, aimed mainly at biodiversity, and insufficiently take into account the suitability of species for the changing urban climate. The urgency for better coordinated and broadly supported selection criteria is therefore high. There is a wealth of knowledge available in the sector, both among growers and managers, but at the same time this knowledge is often fragmented and in parts outdated.*

13.10 u

**Henrik Sjöman:**

## **“Don't choose urban trees by feeling, but by facts”**

Henrik Sjöman, urban tree expert and researcher at the Swedish University of Agricultural Science and the Gothenburg Botanic Garden, advocates for better substantiated choices when planting trees in cities. Although there is much enthusiasm to plant trees, research shows that many young trees fail to survive – often due to incorrect species selection. According to Sjöman, policy and practice focus too much on numbers and too little on suitability for the changing urban climate.

He warns against too narrow a species selection – such as mass planting of lindens – which can lead to large-scale losses in case of disease or pest outbreaks. Sjöman emphasizes the importance of risk diversification and points to the dangers of invasive pests such as the Asian longhorn beetle. He also criticizes the use of conflicting or outdated sources in species selection. Scientific knowledge is available, but still too little applied in practice

Sjöman gives a preview of ongoing research he is conducting in collaboration with Kew Botanical Garden in London, including studies on the provenance of species.

13.45 u

Andrew Hiron

## “The CSR method - an ecological lens for tree choice”



The British scientist Andrew Hiron introduces the CSR method during the symposium: an ecological model that helps to better understand and more precisely select tree species.

CSR stands for **Competitor – Stress-tolerator – Ruderal**, and provides insight into how plants interact with their environment.

Hiron applies this model to trees in the urban context. By positioning species based on their growth strategy – competitive, stress-tolerant, or pioneering – it becomes clear which trees are suitable for which conditions. This offers managers, designers, and growers a practical tool for selecting species able to withstand urban stress factors such as drought, limited rooting space, or disturbance.

The CSR approach can thus contribute to a more robust and climate-resilient urban tree stock.

TREE SELECTION

Eduard Groen:

## “Biodiversity lists compared - there is no single truth”

Eduard Groen examines the similarities and differences between various tree lists in circulation in the Netherlands with a focus on biodiversity. He compares, among others, the \*Register ecologische bomen\* of the municipality of Leiden with the green and black lists of \*Stichting Natuur & Milieu\* and with the recently launched digital \*Bomentabel\*.

The comparison reveals striking differences. For example, the green list of \*Natuur & Milieu\* includes species that are prohibited in Leiden, while the black list contains trees that Leiden actually recommends for their ecological value.

This raises questions about underlying criteria, considerations, and the practical applicability of such lists. Groen argues for more substantiation, context-specific application, and an open discussion among experts about how biodiversity lists are developed and used.

Such lists must be applied with interpretation and judgment. Geographic and functional context largely determine whether a species truly offers ecological and social value.

Henry Kuppen

## “Do municipalities choose the snack bar method or the tree wheel of five?”

At the Tree Selection symposium, Henry Kuppen presents a practice-oriented analysis of how municipalities shape their tree policies. He asks whether they opt for convenience and speed – the “snack bar method” – or for a thoughtful assortment choice based on five pillars: policy goals, location, soil, climate, and knowledge of species and provenance – the “tree wheel of five.”

The presentation is part of an editorial project by Henry Kuppen and the trade journal \*Boomzorg\* and consists of two parts. First, Kuppen investigates how municipalities currently determine their assortment, based on interviews and data analysis from three case municipalities. Second, he explores what a strategic assortment approach could look like, tailored to local ambitions and conditions.

The study shows that choices are often still made ad hoc, while more policy-driven guidance is both possible and desirable. The “tree wheel of five” is not a rigid decision model but a flexible tool that can be applied differently per municipality or district.

15.35 u



Patrick Bellan:

## “Diversity as the key to a sustainable urban tree stock in Malmö”

The Swedish city of Malmö strongly applies the 3-30-300 and 10-20-30 rules to strengthen its urban greenery. According to tree specialist Patrick Bellan, working for the City of Malmö, the city performs well in visibility of trees and proximity of green spaces, but canopy coverage remains a challenge. Projects such as those in Möllevången demonstrate that targeted planting – including fast-growing species – can significantly increase canopy coverage.

Malmö also safeguards biodiversity through the 10-20-30 rule: no single species makes up more than 10% of the tree stock. Risks remain, however, such as the dominant presence of *\*Sorbus intermedia\** along the coast. Evaluations of growth rates show that many species perform poorly in paved urban areas. Therefore, Malmö works with a list of more than 200 species proven to thrive in such conditions. Bellan emphasizes that the key is not native versus non-native, but actual performance in practice.

16.05 u



Jaap Smit:

## “Tree Hunters 2.0 present ten particularly valuable trees”

Among tree growers and managers, there is extensive knowledge about applying both special and sometimes less special tree species in public space. We sought and found ten modern Tree Hunters 2.0 who wanted to advocate for trees that we could and perhaps should use more often. Dendrologist Jaap Smit presents them.

**ORGANISED BY:**

NWST, vakblad BOOMZORG

**FORMAL HOSTS:**

TreePort Midden-Brabant

Treeport Zundert

**Ticket:**  
**€ 95,-**

**More info: [www.treeselection.nl](http://www.treeselection.nl)**

**Location:**

**Boomkwekerij Udenhout**

Schoorstraat 23, 5071 RA Udenhout, NL

**Date:**

**October 16 - 2025**

