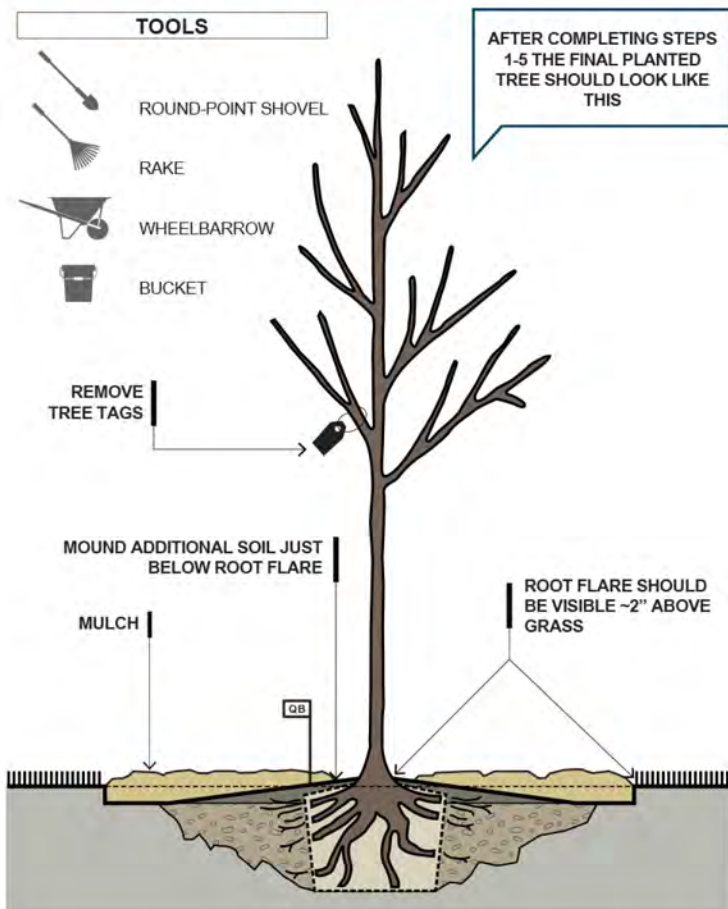


## 5 PLANTING THE TREE



- 1 Place tree in center of the hole and spread out trimmed roots.
- 2 **IMPORTANT:** Adjust planting depth so root flare sits above the surrounding ground level.
  - \* Place shovel across the hole to ensure root flare rests approximately 2" above the lawn. If more soil is needed to adjust height, make sure to pack it down **FIRMLY** under root ball.
- 3 Ensure tree is straight and stable when backfilling. **LIGHTLY** tamp down soil to remove air pockets. If surface roots are exposed cover with extra soil as shown in the illustration.
- 4 Mulch the entire planting area 3" deep, leaving a 3" gap between mulch and the trunk to keep root flare exposed (approximately 2 full wheelbarrows).
- 5 Water thoroughly until entire planting area is saturated (approximately 3-4 buckets of water).
- 6 Remove all tags from the tree and have a staff member check the finished product. After a staff member checks your tree, place the small flag next to the tree trunk.
- 7 Finally, use the rake to clean up any dirt or mulch outside your planting area.



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*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*



*Additional support for this project provided by Erie County and the Erie County Parks Department*



**BUFFALO NIAGARA  
WATERKEEPER®**

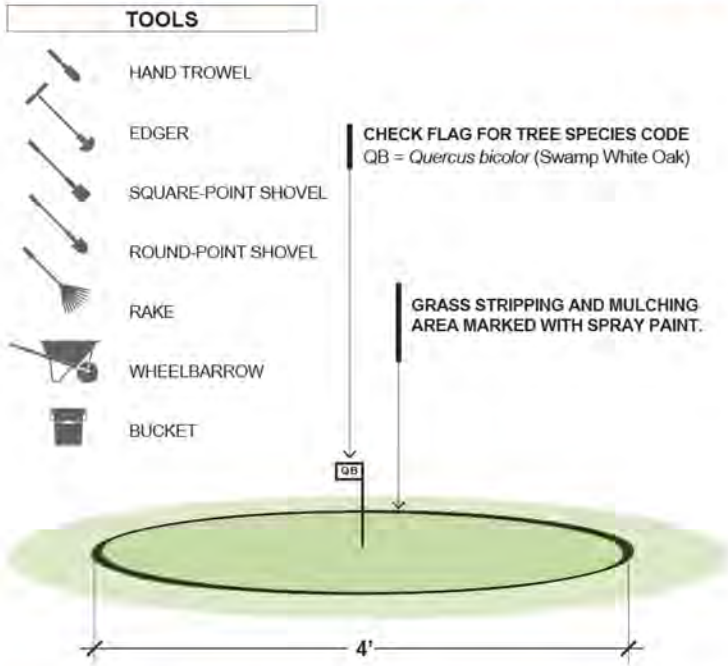
**ELICOTT CREEK PARK REFORESTATION**

# TREE PLANTING FIELD GUIDE



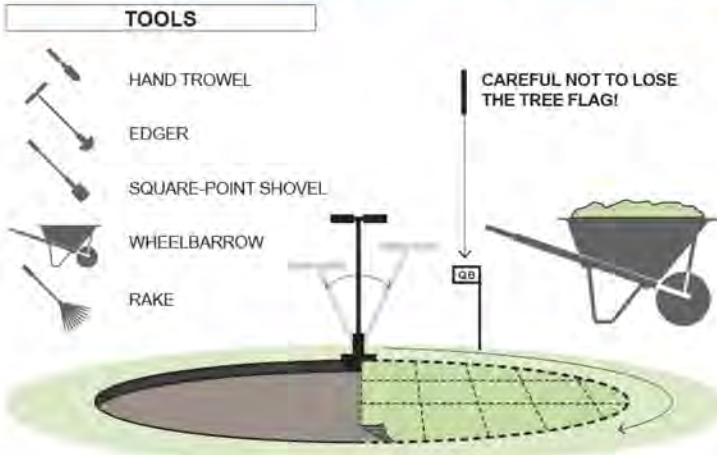
[bnwaterkeeper.org/programs/restorecorps/](http://bnwaterkeeper.org/programs/restorecorps/)

## 1 SUPPLIES & EXISTING CONDITIONS



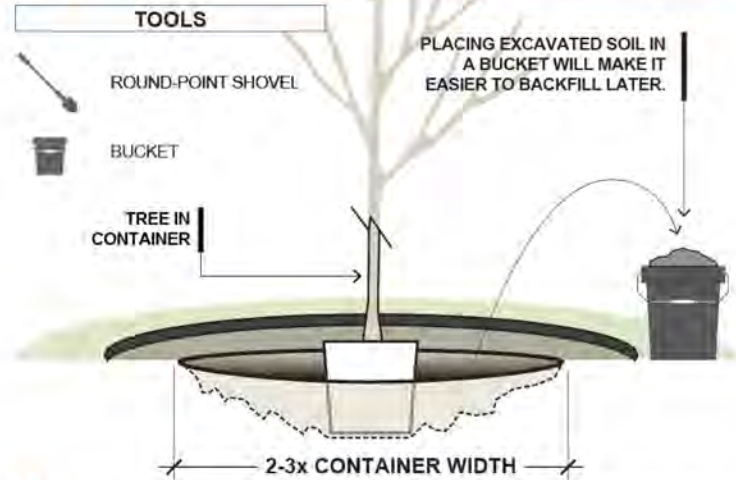
- 1 Check to make sure the planting area has necessary tools and has been properly marked out as shown above.
- 2 If a tree is not already at the planting area, refer to the species code on the flag and bring the proper tree to the planting area. Be sure to handle the tree by the container, do not carry by trunk or branches. Leave in container until step 4.

## 2 PREPARING THE PLANTING AREA



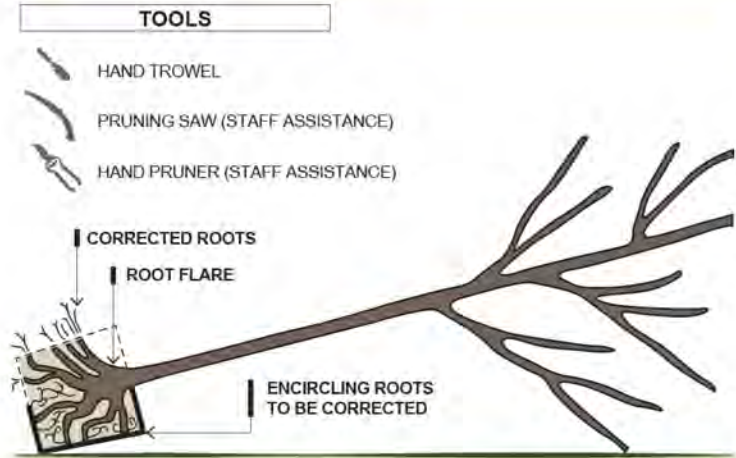
- 1 Cut into planting ring area using an edger. Move edger back-and-forth underneath sod to help loosen sections. A square-point shovel can then be used to lift up and remove the sections of lawn.
  - \* Slice a grid pattern across the planting area with the edger to make sod removal easier (like cutting a pizza!).
- 2 Knock-off good soil from the underside of sod sections into soil bucket using a hand trowel. Be careful not to drop removed lawn sections or root clumps back into planting area.
- 3 Rake up any stray sod material and use wheelbarrow to deliver removed lawn to stockpile area. This material will be picked-up and composted for future park plantings.

## 3 DIGGING THE HOLE



- 1 Using a round-point shovel, dig a shallow saucer-shaped hole at least twice the width of the tree container. The depth of the hole should be approximately 2/3 the height of the container.
  - \* To check for correct planting depth, temporarily place the tree (with container still on) into the hole. After final adjustments have been made, set tree aside until step 4. Be sure to handle the tree by the container, not the trunk.
- 2 **IMPORTANT STEP:** To prevent settling, make sure bottom of the tree will sit on undisturbed or compacted soil. If hole is too deep, return soil and pack down firmly before planting.
- 3 When dug correctly, the planting hole should resemble a shallow saucer, not a deep bowl (dig wide, not deep).

## 4 PREPARING THE TREE



- 1 Carefully lay tree on side so as to not break branches. Hold the base of the trunk while a teammate firmly but gently pulls off the container.
- 2 **IMPORTANT STEP:** Locate and expose the top of trunk root flare (area where the trunk widens and the roots begin). This may require gently removing soil from the top of the root ball.
- 3 It is not uncommon for container grown trees to be "root bound" and contain circling roots. Call a staff member over to inspect the root conditions if your tree roots appear bound. Before proceeding to the next step, staff will help determine if the tree is ready for planting or if root pruning will be required.

**PLANTING THE TREE**