

Shade Tree Info – THE MAPLES

Plant a TREE... not a twig

Acer rubrum is commonly known as **Red Maple**, or Swamp Maple. Varieties of *Acer rubrum* offered by Four Seasons include:

'Autumn Flame' – one of the first Red Maples to show fall color, Autumn Flame has smaller leaves than most other Red Maples. The branching habit is excellent and the rate of growth is medium. The bright medium-red fall color occurs about 2 weeks earlier than 'Red Sunset.'
Height x width in 20 years = 30-35' x 30-35'

'Red Sunset' (*A. r.* "Franksred")– has consistently been rated as one of the top 5 shade trees in America since its introduction in the mid 1960's. The clean green leaves turn a fiery orange-red every fall and the symmetrical branching of 'Red Sunset' make for a great specimen tree.
Height x width in 20 years = 35-40' x 30-35'

'October Glory' – is the last of the Red Maples to show fall color, with leaves turning deep red about 2 weeks after 'Red Sunset.' As with all the *rubrum* Maples we offer, excellent branching structure and bright light gray bark is a trademark of 'October Glory.'
Height x width in 20 years = 35-40' x 30-35'

General notes: *Acer rubrum* varieties prefer moist soils (remember, they are also known as Swamp Maple) and they require a soil pH below 7. Therefore, *rubrum* Maples are NOT a good choice for planting in parkways where their roots will wander into the limestone base of a street. But for open lawn areas, they are beautiful trees, and the color they reliably achieve each fall is intense. Another interesting feature of *Acer rubrum* is the flowers that appear on bare branches each spring... they are also red!

Acer saccharum is commonly known as **Sugar Maple** and is the tree from which Maple sap is collected and boiled down to become Maple syrup. We offer several varieties of Sugar Maple:

'Green Mountain' – introduced in 1964, 'Green Mountain' originated in the actual Green Mountains of Vermont. Summer foliage is dark green and resists scorch. Fall color is stunning, combining yellow, orange, apricot and red for a fiery display. 'Green Mountain' develops an oval, upright form. Height x width in 20 years = 35-40' x 30-35'

'Legacy' – was selected and introduced in the mid-1980's and is noted for rapid growth and heavy, symmetrical branching. The form of 'Legacy' is a bit more pyramidal than other Sugar Maples and the foliage is thick and leathery. Fiery reds and oranges make this variety a show-stopper each fall. Height x width in 20 years = 40-45' x 30-35'

'Wright Brothers' – was developed in central Ohio and introduced in 1980. Noted for rapid growth and resistance to leaf scorch, 'Wright Brothers' has lighter green summer foliage that turns reddish orange each fall. The nicely-branched 'Wright Brothers' form is more rounded than other Sugar Maples. Height x width in 20 years = 45-50' x 30-35'

General notes: Sugar Maples are native throughout most of North America and the wood is very hard and strong, excellent for furniture. Sugar Maples will tolerate some shade, and can easily be found growing in most any wooded area in Northwest Indiana. They are long-lived and can grow to 75' high or more. Sugar Maples are "tapped" in Feb/March, the sap is collected and boiled to produce Maple Syrup

Acer platanooides is known as **Norway Maple**. We sell only 1 variety of Norway Maple, the popular maroon-leaf variety called **'Crimson King.'** This variety is quite popular due to the intensity of its leaf color. It will easily become a focal point in a landscape. Norway Maples produce large leaves and afford dense shade. While 'Crimson King' is much slower growing than normal green-leafed varieties of Norway Maple, it will eventually develop a canopy dense enough to prevent sunlight penetration, and turfgrass will cease to grow beneath it. It should also be noted that some states, and some local communities (Sand Creek) forbid the planting of any Norway Maples due to the invasiveness of seedlings. This is not a big problem with 'Crimson King,' but since it is a variety of Norway Maple, it is usually included on forbidden tree lists. 'Crimson King' Norway Maple hates wet feet, so avoid low areas. Height x width in 20 years will be about 20-25' x 18-25'

Acer x freemanii – the “x” means it is an interspecific hybrid, and the parents are Red Maple and Silver Maple. Many folks who live in older houses have large Silver Maples in their yards, and most have no kind words to say about the seeds (“helicopters”) that are so abundantly produced each spring. Because the *Acer x freemanii* varieties are hybrids, they are essentially seedless! And they display the best traits of both parents: rapid growth & tolerance of heavy clay soils (from Silver Maple) and strong central leader and good fall color (from *Acer rubrum*). We really like these 2 varieties:

‘**Autumn Blaze**’ – selected in Northern Ohio and introduced in the early 1980’s, we remain very impressed with ‘Autumn Blaze.’ We have grown and installed this variety since 1992 and find it to be a vigorous grower with a dominant central leader that develops excellent red fall color. It is relatively free of insect and disease problems. If your primary goal is to get the fastest-growing shade tree, ‘Autumn Blaze’ would be hard to beat. And it has been completely seedless in our experience. Height x width in 20 years = 30-35’ x 20-25’

‘**Sienna Glen**’ is very similar to ‘Autumn Blaze’ and it is difficult to tell them apart, until the foliage turns colors each fall. ‘Sienna Glen’ achieves a very beautiful brick red color a few days earlier than ‘Autumn Blaze.’ Branching structure, form, leaf size and bark color are nearly identical to ‘Autumn Blaze.’ Height x width in 20 years = 30-35’ x 20-25’

Other Maples –

Acer miyabei ‘**State Street**’ – (*A. m.* ‘Morton’) was selected at the Morton Arboretum and introduced by Chicagoland Grows in 1988. Named after “that great street” in the Windy City, **State Street Maple** really is a neat tree. The bark is corky and develops vertical scales. Medium dark green leaves are 5-lobed and turn a pale golden yellow each fall. ‘State Street’ Maple has a medium growth rate and is quite tolerant of alkaline soils (pH 6.0 – 8.0). This makes it a great choice to replace Ash trees that were killed by EAB. Drought tolerance is yet another virtue of ‘State Street’ Maple. Height x width in 20 years = 20-25’ x 15-20’

Acer griseum – **Paperbark Maple** is truly a gem for all seasons. Even though it is not a big tree, Paperbark Maple is genuinely impressive with its unique 3-lobed leaves that are medium green in summer and achieve a coppery-bronze red fall color. But perhaps the best feature of this tree is the reason it is named Paperbark. The bark is an almost metallic brown color and “exfoliates,” or peels in very thin layers, in the same manner that many Birches do. This tree is literally “tough as nails,” grows in full sun to light shade, and is very tolerant of heavy clay soils. Leaves emerge late spring. No other tree can compare with the winter interest of the incredibly beautiful bark of a Paperbark Maple. Height x width in 20 years = 15-20’ x 12-15’

Acer ginnala – **Amur Maple** is another “tough as nails” tree. Amur Maple is tolerant of most conditions except wet feet. It is a multi-stem (clump) grower and has bright glossy green summer foliage that turns a pleasing maroon-red in fall. The tiny white flowers in spring produce small red seeds called samaras (“helicopters”), but these are rarely of any concern. Amur Maple grows wider than tall, ultimately 15-20’ H x 20-25’ W

Acer palmatum – **Japanese Maple** is available in many different forms, both with green as well as maroon foliage. We will focus our comments here on the upright growing varieties of *Acer palmatum* and *A. p.* ‘Atropurpureum’ and will bypass the ornamental *A. p.* Dissectum varieties.

Green Japanese Maple is a graceful upright spreading tree with light green summer foliage that turns fiery red in fall. It is a sturdy tree that will tolerate full but prefers partial to half shade. Leaves are usually 7-lobed and afford the graceful fine texture common to Japanese Maples. Does not tolerate drought or windy locations. Height x width in 20 years = 15-20’ x 12-18’

Acer palmatum ‘**Atropurpureum**’ is a very large group of “**Red-Leafed**” **Japanese Maples**. We have trialed many cultivars since 1975 and continue to believe that *A. p.* ‘Bloodgood’ is one of, if not the most winter-hardy variety. **Bloodgood Japanese Maples** retain their deep maroon-red foliage color throughout the summer, unlike many other red-leafed varieties that fade to a reddish-green. This tree requires at least 5-6 hours of sunlight daily to maintain its leaf color. Avoid windy locations. Height x width in 20 years = 15-20’ x 15-20’

“**HE WHO PLANTS TREES LOVES OTHERS BESIDES HIMSELF**” - ENGLISH PROVERB

“Don't worry if your job is small, and your rewards are few. Remember that the mighty oak was once a nut, like you.”

Quercus might sound like a quirky name to you, but this is the genus name Linnaeus gave to **Oaks**. We have all heard sayings about Oaks, like “*Sturdy as an Oak*” for good reason: Oaks are long lived noble trees. There are many species in the Oak family, but most Oaks can be categorized as either belonging to the White Oak group, with rounded leaf tips, or the Red Oak group, which has pointed leaf tips.

Quercus alba is known as **White Oak** and many large native White Oaks exist in Northwest Indiana. White Oaks are difficult to transplant, and not readily available in nurseries, but they possess extremely hard wood making excellent lumber. We know of native White Oaks that were here during the Civil War. National champion White Oak is 86'H x 116'W in Lawrenceville, VA.

Quercus bicolor is known as **Swamp White Oak**. Much more easily transplanted and adaptable to our heavy clay soils, Swamp White Oak is a fairly rapid grower and makes a well branched, sturdy tree. Usually retains its leaves well into winter months. Fall color is yellow to brown. Height x width in 20 years = 25-30' x 20-25'

Quercus ellipsoidalis - commonly known as **Hill's Oak** or **Northern Pin Oak**. It is a rapid grower with strong, horizontal branches, like *Q. palustris*. However, Hill's Oak does not have problems with alkaline soils and chlorotic foliage that plague so many *Q. palustris* trees in our area. Form is pyramidal, but spreading and lower branches become pendulous with age. Leave of *Quercus ellipsoidalis* and *Q. palustris* are almost identical. Height x width in 20 years = 30-35' x 25-30'

Quercus imbricaria is called **Shingle Oak** because the wood of this tree was thinly split to make shingles for the cabins of pioneers in the Midwest. Glossy leaves are not lobed, and are held into winter. Habit similar to Pin and Hill's Oak. Height x width in 20 years = 30-35' x 25-30'

Quercus macrocarpa is the stately **Bur Oak**, having distinctive bark and leaf shape. Bur Oak is a slow grower but is adaptable to heavy clay and alkaline soils. Acorns are unique. Bur Oak is not a beautiful child, but grows more noble with age. Height x width in 20 years = 20-25' x 15-20'

Quercus muehlenbergii – known as **Chinkapin Oak** or **Yellow Chestnut Oak**. This species has beautiful coarsely toothed leaves. Not a common tree in NW IN, but is native from Maine to Texas. Very tolerant of alkaline soils. Height x width in 20 years = 20-25' x 20 – 25'

Quercus palustris – is quite common in our area, but suffers from Iron Chlorosis (yellowing foliage) because it does not tolerate alkaline soils. **Pin Oak** is a rapid grower, will tolerate moist soils and has a spreading pyramidal habit with lower branches becoming pendulous. We have found *Q. ellipsoidalis* to be much more adaptable and a better tree for NW IN and the heavy alkaline soils that are widely prevalent here. Height x width in 20 years = 30-35' x 25-30'

Quercus rubra is known as **Red Oak** and is as common as *Q. alba* in NW IN. Red Oak is another fast grower, usually gaining 2' per year. Leaves are dark green, 4-8" long with pointed lobes often achieving russet-red to red fall color. More tolerant of alkaline soils than *Q. palustris*. Red Oak is a valuable lumber tree. Height x width in 20 years = 30-35' x 25-30'

Quercus vellutina is **Black Oak**. Bark is deeply furrowed and nearly black on older trees. Leaves can reach 10" length and are lustrous dark green, changing to reddish-brown in fall. Native from Wisconsin to Texas. Height x width in 20 years = 25-30' x 20-25"

Quercus robur x Quercus bicolor – We are genuinely impressed with **Regal Prince Oak** which is a hybrid between fastigiata English Oak and Swamp White Oak. Regal Prince has a strong upright oval form with glossy dark green leaves, making it a superior, tightly columnar tree. Usually low-branched and maintaining its slender habit, it would be ideal for narrow areas, parkways, or for tall screening. Height x width in 20 years = 30-35' x 25-30'

“THE TRUE MEANING OF LIFE IS TO PLANT TREES UNDER WHOSE SHADE YOU DO NOT EXPECT TO SIT.”

NELSON HENDERSON

Shade Tree Info - OTHER SHADE TREES

Plant a TREE... not a twig

THE BIRCHES

Betula nigra = **River Birch**, which has “exfoliating” (= peeling) gray-brown to salmon-brown bark. Usually grown in “clump” form (multi-stem), River Birch is the most vigorous and long-lived of our Birches. Green summer foliage turns yellow each fall. River Birch is tolerant of moist to wet areas, but will not tolerate highly alkaline soils (iron chlorosis). Height x width in 20 years = 30-35' x 20-25'

B. platyphylla japonica '**Whitespire**' is a white-barked Birch that is resistant to Bronze Birch Borer, which usually kills European and Paper Birches in NW IN. The trick for success is to plant your **Whitespire Birch** in cool soil so the tree avoids moisture stress. This may be accomplished with a large diameter mulch ring or by planting within a bed of ground cover. The bark of **Whitespire Birch** takes longer than other Birches to display the desirable white color. Height x width in 20 years = 25-30 x 15-20'

'**Royal Frost Birch**' - a maroon-leaved form of *B. platyphylla japonica* with growth characteristics and culture similar to 'Whitespire.' Maroon leaves + white bark = pretty tree. In 20 years, 25-30'H x 15-20'W

HONEYLOCUST

Gleditsia triacanthos '**Inermis**' – the 'Inermis' is important... it means “without thorns.” If you ever saw a **Honeylocust** that did have thorns, you would understand clearly. '**Sunburst**' displays yellow foliage on its newest growth. However, we like the green foliage of **Skyline Honeylocust** with its ascending branching. Honeylocusts grow to become good-sized trees, up to 40-45', but their leaves are so small, you won't need to rake them in the fall. Skyline provides filtered light and makes an airy “ceiling” over a patio or deck. Height x width in 20 years = 25-30' x 20-25'

SWEETGUM

Liquidambar styraciflua - is called **Sweetgum**, and the spiny fruits of the species are called gumballs (but not the kind you would chew!) We like **Worplesdon Sweetgum** because its foliage is more deeply cut than that of typical Sweetgums, and it is seedless (sorry... NO gumballs) Excellent orange-maroon fall color is a highlight. Height x width in 20 years = 25-30' x 20-25'

TULIPTREE

Liriodendron tulipifera – the State Tree of Indiana is **Tuliptree** with its unique leaf shape. Tuliptree is also known as Tulip Poplar and is a member of the Magnolia family. A rapid grower, Tuliptree is tolerant of moderately alkaline soils. Flowers are greenish-yellow with orange interior and shaped much like Tulip flowers. Yellow fall foliage color. Height x width in 20 years = 30-35' x 15-25'

BLACK GUM, TUPELO, SOUR GUM

Nyssa sylvatica – several common names for the same tree can lead to confusion, but in the proper location, a **Black Gum** can become a true asset in the landscape. Requires acidic soil (pH < 6.5) and will not tolerate alkalinity. Black Gum is a relatively slow grower. Narrow, lustrous dark green leaves change into incredible fall color: yellow, scarlet & maroon. Height x width in 20 years = 18 -25 x 15-20'

WILLOW

Salix alba – we offer only one variety, the **Golden Weeping Willow**, *Salix alba* 'Tristis' which will grow to 60-70' high producing a broad canopy of gracefully weeping golden branches. Tolerant of moist soils, this tree is at its best adjacent to a pond. Height x width in 20 years = 25-30' x 15-20'

LINDEN

Tilia cordata – **Littleleaf Linden** has shiny dark green leaves that turn a beautiful clear yellow in fall. This tree is densely branched and has a distinct pyramidal-oval shape. Small white flowers in June are sweetly fragrant. We like *T. cordata* '**Corinthian**' which will grow to 45'H x 15'W as well as *T.c.* '**Greenspire**' which will become 40-50'H x 25-30'W. Height x width in 20 years = 20-25' x 10-20'

LONDON PLANETREE

Platanus xacerifolia – **London Planetree** is a hybrid between American Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*) and Oriental Planetree (*P. orientalis*). London Planetree is a big tree that will grow just about anywhere, and is tolerant of clay soils, high pH, and air pollution. The bark is one of the best features of this tree and you can see what we mean by observing our London Planetree located near our mulch stockpiles. A rapid grower ideal for large open spaces. Height x width in 20 years = 25-30' x 20-25'

There are many other shade trees worthy of your consideration, including **Hornbeam** (*Carpinus*), **Hackberry** (*Celtis*), **Katsuratree** (*Cercidiphyllum*), **Ginkgo** (*Ginkgo*), **Kentucky Coffeetree** (*Gymnocladus*) and more. Interested? Ask us!