Chinese Stewartia

Stewartia sinensis



Chinese Stewartia in fall
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 22 feet

Spread: 22 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 5

Description:

An incredible accent tree with magnificent mottled bark in cream, brown and tan, stunning in winter; showy large white flowers with orange centers in early summer; needs organic, acidic soil and protection from drying winds; year round interest

Ornamental Features

Chinese Stewartia features delicate white flowers with orange anthers along the branches in mid summer. It has forest green deciduous foliage. The pointy leaves turn an outstanding red in the fall. The mottled khaki (brownish-green) bark is extremely showy and adds significant winter interest.

Landscape Attributes

Chinese Stewartia is a dense deciduous tree with a distinctive and refined pyramidal form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance tree, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Chinese Stewartia is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade

Planting & Growing

Chinese Stewartia will grow to be about 22 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 22 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 70 years or more.

This tree performs well in both full sun and full shade. It requires an evenly moist well-drained soil for optimal growth, but will die in standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is very fussy about its soil conditions and must have rich, acidic soils to ensure success, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America.