Red Maple

Acer rubrum 'var. rubrum'



Red Maple in fall
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Red Maple in fall
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Height: 50 feet

Spread: 40 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 3

Other Names: Swamp Maple, Scarlet Maple

Description:

This tree lights up consistently red-orange, with hints of yellow in fall; a great shade tree, but quite intolerant of alkaline soils

Ornamental Features

Red Maple features showy clusters of red flowers along the branches in early spring before the leaves. It has green deciduous foliage which emerges red in spring. The lobed leaves turn outstanding shades of red and orange in the fall. It produces red samaras in late spring. The furrowed silver bark and brick red branches add an interesting dimension to the landscape.

Landscape Attributes

Red Maple is a deciduous tree with a shapely oval 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 in summer after the leaves have fully developed, as it may 'bleed' sap if pruned in late winter or early spring. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Red Maple is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade

Planting & Growing

Red Maple will grow to be about 50 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 40 feet. It has a high canopy with a typical clearance of 7 feet from the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. As it matures, the lower branches of this tree can be strategically removed to create a high enough canopy to support unobstructed human traffic underneath. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 80 years or more.

This tree should only be grown in full sunlight. It is quite adaptable, prefering to grow in average to wet conditions, and will even tolerate some standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type, but has a definite preference for acidic soils, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selection of a native North American species.