Dragon Tears™ Japanese Maple

Acer palmatum 'JN4'



Dragon Tears Japanese Maple foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 8 feet

Sunlight: ◐

Hardiness Zone: 5

Description:

A stunning selection with strong horizontal branching and unique pendulous branch tips; foliage emerges crimson, matures to burgundy red, then turns rusty red in fall; a graceful looking, slow growing accent for home landscapes

Ornamental Features

Dragon Tears Japanese Maple is primarily valued in the landscape or garden for its ornamental upright and spreading habit of growth. It has attractive burgundy deciduous foliage which emerges crimson in spring. The lobed palmate leaves are highly ornamental and turn an outstanding brick red in the fall. It produces red samaras from early to mid fall. The rough gray bark and red branches add an interesting dimension to the landscape.

Landscape Attributes

Dragon Tears Japanese Maple is an open deciduous tree with a strong central leader and an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

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.

Dragon Tears Japanese Maple is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Dragon Tears Japanese Maple will grow to be about 10 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 8 feet. It tends to be a little leggy, 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 80 years or more.

This tree does best in a location that gets morning sunlight but is shaded from the hot afternoon sun, although it will also grow in partial shade. Keep it away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. This plant will benefit from an application of bonemeal and/or mycorrhizal fertilizer at the time of planting. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, 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 is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Dragon Tears Japanese Maple is a fine choice for the yard, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Its large size and upright habit of growth lend it for use as a solitary accent, or in a composition surrounded by smaller plants around the base and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.