



Red Maple

Species: *Acer Rubrum* L.

Family: Maple Family (*Acer/aceraceae*)

By: Sophie Swarthout



Appearance: Known for its brilliant autumnal foliage. Leaves are green but turn a pretty orange-Scarlett. It has a pyramidal shape when young but as the tree matures, it becomes rounded.

Characteristics:

Leaves - Leaves (2.5 to 6 inches long and wide), Simple, opposite and deciduous. The primary lobes (usually 5 but occasionally 3) usually have smaller lobes; their margins are coarse, irregular and singly or doubly toothed). Petioles 2 to 4 inches long, slender and usually red.

Flowers- Small (1/8 inch long), bright red, yellowish or orange. Appear before the leaves and in early spring. The male and female flower differs due to the female's deeper red color and long stalk.

Fruits- Samaras, Mature in May or June and have a bright red color, 2/3 to 1 inch long. They have wings that are slightly divergent (3/4 in. long), produced on drooping stems in small lateral clusters.

Twigs- Twigs are slender, dark red, leaf scars crescent – shaped. Odorless when cut or broken.

Uniqueness: The seeds of the fruits ripen in late spring instead of fall like other maple trees.

History: During the last Ice age the red maple retreated with other hardwoods to the relative shelter of the lower Mississippi Valley, moving north after the pioneering conifers as the ice sheets melted. It was first cultivated in 1656.

Size: Trunk diameter, 2 to 4 feet wide. Height 40 to 60 feet.

Did you know?

-The red maple is also known as the Swamp, Scarlet, and red sunset maple.

-When growing in the open it has a short trunk, dense crown yet it is narrowly oblong. In the forest the trunks are much higher off the ground.

-White-tailed deer, moose and snowshoe hare are seen browsing by the tree.

-The red maple can live up to 200 years. It has always been known as a fast growing tree. Occupies a wide range and is moderately tolerant of shade in the north.

References:

http://www.aboutmapletrees.com/red_maple_tree.shtml

<http://www.arborday.org/Trees/treeguide/treeDetail.cfm?ID=28>

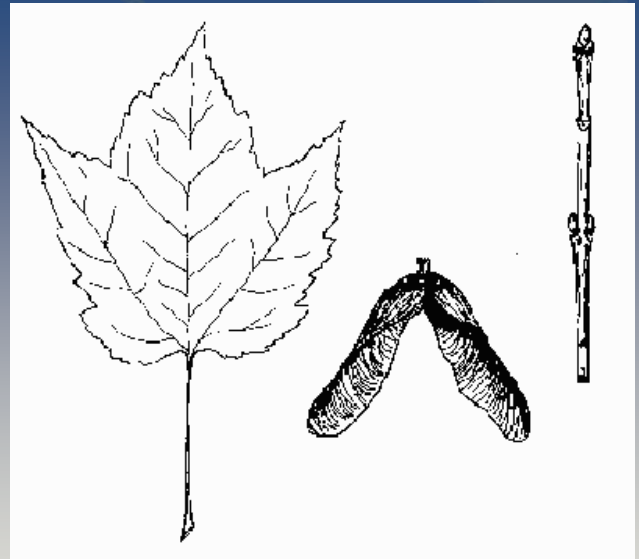
<http://www.massmaple.org/treeID.html>

The Illustrated Book of Trees

Importance: the wood is somewhat heavy, soft but it is neither strong nor durable. It is used for furniture, woodenware, wood pulp and distillation products. The tree is usually planted for ornamental reasons or as a shade tree. Sugar and Syrup are sometimes made from the sap but it's of a lesser quality than that of a sugar maple tree.

Threats: The Asian longhorned beetle is a new but potentially big threat. The damage is caused by beetle larvae, which burrow deep within a tree to feed on its food and water conducting vessels. Continued feeding causes structural defects.

Another harmful threat to the Red Maple is the Verticillium Wilt or Maple wilt. It is a common and serious disease of maples. The destructive soil-borne fungus, Verticillium, kills many maples each year throughout North America. Most pesticides are tolerated by this tree but should be used with caution. Salt from the streets can harm the tree so they should not be planted too close to roads.



Geographical range: It is generally found in eastern United States and southeast Canada. Common in swamps and moist slopes but also abundant on dry slopes.



What is another name for the red maple?

- A. Spotted Maple
- B. Syrup Maple
- C. Black Maple
- D. Weeping Maple
- E. Swamp Maple and Red Sunset