

One of the most beautiful, vibrant, and useful trees is the Red Maple tree known for its brilliant red autumn foliage that brings the tree to life in the fall, the Red Maple is very popular in the western hemisphere and all around the world. The Red Maple tree belongs to the Maple family. There are approximately 129 types, which the majority grow in Asia followed by Europe, North Africa, and North America. The Maple tree's family name *Aceraceae* (*acer*) comes from Latin word meaning "sharp" which is symbolic for the pointy leaves. The Red Maple tree is of course famous because of its vibrant red leaves, but this Maple tree is also very popular among garden designers because of its ability to bring color and life into a garden. Because of the tree's great stature and size it also wills the ability to create shaded areas within a garden. The Red Maple grows very fast, like most Maple trees, and is able to do this in many different types of soil. It is known to withstand deadly pests and diseases well, and can handle most weather conditions easily making it very durable.

Life History

Red maple (*Acer rubrum*) is one of the most abundant and widespread trees in North America. The Red Maple tree grows at a very fast rate and lives a very long life reaching 150 years and growing up to 90 feet. The life process of this tree is very intriguing. The Red Maple is one of the first trees to flower in the spring and they are widely adaptable in the soils in which they grow. The fruit produced by the Red Maple are known as maple keys (samaras). Characteristically this tree is very fruitful, on average it can produce between 12,000 to 91,000 seeds. These seeds do not require pregermination they can germinate immediately after ripening with very little light and moist conditions. Northern grown maples fall into a seeding period of 80 to 150 days. Red maple trees prefer full sun, but will also grow in full shade. It reaches maturity within 70 to 80 years. Average mature trees are 60 to 90 feet in height and 18 to 30 inches in diameter. The largest registered living red maple is growing near Armada, MI and it is 125 ft tall. The Red Maple's flowers grow in clusters and droop down. The Red Maple's rooting system is adaptable to all

Commercial Use

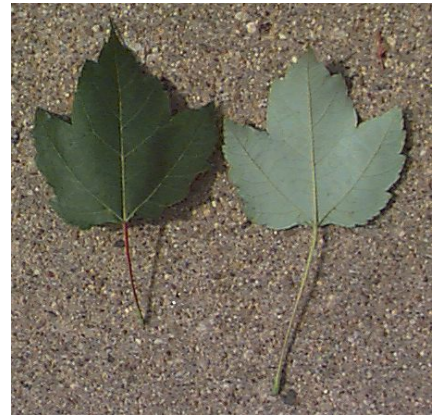
The Red Maple tree provides many products used in everyday life, such as musical instruments, syrup, and furniture. The most popular product of the Red Maple tree is its ability to produce maple sugar. The Red Maple tree produces sap that is useful for some commercial products, but it is not as high of quality of sap as produced by other types of Maple trees. Maple tree seeds are also used and consumed on a daily basis and are usually boiled in water and then mixed into different exotic drinks. The Red Maple is known to produce excellent tonewood, meaning it carries sounds extremely well. Several string instruments, including instruments such as violins and guitars, are produced from maple wood. Red Maple trees are used to produce many products.

Leaves

Leaves of the red maple are triangular-shaped, and 3 to 6 inches wide with three to five lobes. They have shallow, sharp-angled clefts between the lobes and are coarsely toothed. During the spring the leaf is a very shiny green, and in the fall the leaves turn to a vibrant orange-red color giving it its name of the Red Maple.

Bark-Stems

Immature trees grow a very smooth and light grey bark, but as the tree matures it darkens and creates ridges. Average size trees sometimes have a distinctive concentric ring pattern. The trees stems and twigs also give off a red look to them in the springtime.



General Information

Red Maple are a major source of pollen in the early spring before other plants have flowered, this trait makes maples very important to the survival of Honeybees. Pulpwood is very abundant in Red Maple trees, which is used to create paper. These fibers have very thick walls that prevent collapsing upon drying making the wood a great option for producing paper.



Question.

The Red Maple is known for its ability to flower and bear fruit early in the spring. On average how many seeds can a single Red Maple Tree produce?

Resources



"Red Maple." *Red Maple Tree | Everything You Want To Know About Red Maple Tree.* Web. 19 Sept. 2011. <<http://redmapletree.org/>>.

"Acer Rubrum L." *Northeastern Area State & Private Forestry - USDA Forest Service.* Web. 21 Sept. 2011. <http://na.fs.fed.us/pubs/silvics_manual/volume_2/acer/rubrum.htm>.

"Red Maple." *FCPS Home Page Redirect Page.* Web. 21 Sept. 2011. <http://www.fcps.edu/islandcreekes/ecology/red_maple.htm>.

Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)

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