

***Taxodium distichum*: Baldcypress¹**

Edward F. Gilman, Dennis G. Watson, Ryan W. Klein, Andrew K. Koeser, Deborah R. Hilbert, and Drew C. McLean²

Introduction

Narrowly to broadly pyramidal when young, baldcypress, the state tree of Louisiana, eventually develops into a broad-topped, spreading, open specimen when mature. Capable of reaching 100 to 150 feet in height, most landscape specimens are rarely seen in this open form because they are usually much younger and shorter. Trees grow at a moderately fast rate, reaching 40 to 50 feet in about 15 to 25 years. Although it is native to wetlands along running streams, growth is often faster on moist, well-drained soil. The green, needle-like leaves turn a brilliant coppery yellow in fall before dropping, but the bare branches and reddish gray, peeling bark provide much landscape interest during the winter. The trunk grows unusually thick toward the base, even on young trees. The small seeds are used by some birds and squirrels.



Figure 1. Full Form—*Taxodium distichum*: baldcypress

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2. Edward F. Gilman, professor emeritus, Environmental Horticulture Department; Dennis G. Watson, former associate professor, Agricultural Engineering Department; Ryan W. Klein, graduate assistant, Environmental Horticulture Department; Andrew K. Koeser, assistant professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center; Deborah R. Hilbert, graduate assistant, Environmental Horticulture Department, GCREC; and Drew C. McLean, biological scientist, Environmental Horticulture Department, GCREC; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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General Information

Scientific name: *Taxodium distichum*

Pronunciation: tack-SO-dee-um DISS-tick-um

Common name(s): Baldcypress

Family: Cupressaceae

USDA hardiness zones: 5A through 10B (Figure 2)

Origin: native to the southeastern United States, in addition to east Texas and Atlantic coastal states as far north as Delaware

UF/IFAS Invasive Assessment Status: Native

Uses: street without sidewalk; screen; specimen; reclamation; parking lot island < 100 sq ft; parking lot island 100–200 sq ft; parking lot island > 200 sq ft; sidewalk cutout (tree pit); tree lawn 4–6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft wide; urban tolerant; highway median; shade; hedge



Figure 2. Range

Description

Height: 60 to 80 feet

Spread: 25 to 35 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical

Crown shape: pyramidal, upright/erect

Crown density: dense

Growth rate: fast

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: linear, lanceolate

Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: ½ - ¾ inch

Leaf color: green

Fall color: yellow to copper

Fall characteristic: showy



Figure 3. Leaf—*Taxodium distichum*: baldcypress

Flower

Flower color: brown

Flower characteristics: not showy



Figure 4. Flower—*Taxodium distichum*: baldcypress

Fruit

Fruit shape: round or ovulate, cone

Fruit length: ½ to 1 inch

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: green when young, then turns brown and hard with maturity

Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; not showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem; resinous



Figure 5. Cone—*Taxodium distichum*: baldcypress

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/branches: branches droop; showy; typically one trunk; no thorns

Bark: gray and/or reddish brown, smooth, fibrous, with extremely shallow or completely lacking furrows, and with a buttressing base

Pruning requirement: little required

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: green

Current year twig thickness: thin

Wood specific gravity: 0.46



Figure 6. Knees—*Taxodium distichum*: baldcypress

Culture

Light requirement: full sun to partial shade

Soil tolerances: sand; loam; clay; acidic; slightly alkaline; wet to well-drained

Drought tolerance: high

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate



Figure 7. Bark—*Taxodium distichum*: baldcypress

Credits: Gitta Hasing

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: yes

Outstanding tree: yes

Ozone sensitivity: tolerant

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: resistant

Pest resistance: resistant to pests/diseases

Use and Management

Although often seen at water's edge where it will develop "knees", or root projections, that will extend above the water, baldcypress can also be grown in dry locations and makes an attractive lawn, street, or shade tree. Cypress knees do not generally form on these drier sites. Cities from Charlotte, NC, Dallas, TX to Tampa, FL currently use it as a street tree and it should be used more extensively throughout its range in urban landscapes. It provides a good vertical accent to the landscape and should be used more often in urban areas. Baldcypress can be clipped into a formal hedge, creating a wonderful soft screen.

Surprisingly, the roots do not appear to lift sidewalks and curbs as readily as some other species. Its delicate, feathery foliage affords light, dappled shade, and the heartwood of baldcypress is quite resistant to rot. However, most lumber available at lumber yards today is sapwood and is not resistant to rot.

Baldcypress is ideal for wet locations, such as its native habitat of stream banks and mucky soils, but the trees will also grow remarkably well on almost any soil, including heavy, compacted, or poorly-drained muck, except alkaline soils with a pH above 7.5. Locate where the sun will strike the tree on all sides for best symmetrical development. Baldcypress is relatively maintenance-free, requiring pruning only to remove dead wood and unwanted lower branches which persist on the tree. It maintains a desirably straight trunk and a moderately dense canopy and does not form double or multiple leaders as do many other large trees.

The cultivar 'Monarch of Illinois' has a very wide-spreading form and 'Shawnee Brave' has a narrow, pyramidal form, 15 to 20 feet wide. 'Pendens' has drooping branchlets and large cones. *Taxodium ascendens* is native to wet, boggy areas with standing water, whereas *Taxodium distichum* is more common along streams.

Propagation is by seed.

Pests

Bagworms can defoliate portions of the tree. Mites can be particularly troublesome in dry summers without irrigation, causing early leaf browning and defoliation in mid to late summer.

Diseases

Twig blight is caused by a weak pathogen and is usually present on dead or dying tissue. When the tree is stressed the fungus can kill branch tips. Dead tips can be pruned off. Do not let dead or diseased branches remain on the tree. Keep trees healthy with regular fertilization.

References

Koeser, A. K., Hasing, G., Friedman, M. H., and Irving, R. B. 2015. Trees: North & Central Florida. Gainesville: University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

Koeser, A.K., Friedman, M.H., Hasing, G., Finley, H., Schelb, J. 2017. Trees: South Florida and the Keys. Gainesville: University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

Ilex cassine: Dahoon Holly¹

Edward F. Gilman, Dennis G. Watson, Ryan W. Klein, Andrew K. Koeser, Deborah R. Hilbert, and Drew C. McLean²

Introduction

Attractive when tightly clipped into a tall screen or allowed to grow naturally into its single-trunked, small tree form, dahoon holly is ideal for a variety of landscape settings. Capable of reaching 40 feet in height, dahoon holly is usually seen at a height of 20 to 30 feet with an 8 to 12-foot spread. The smooth, supple, shiny dark green, evergreen leaves, two to three inches long, have just a few serrations near the tip. Possessing male and female flowers on separate plants, at least two dahoon hollies (male and female) must be planted in the landscape to ensure production of the brilliant red berries in fall and winter. The berries serve as an excellent food source for wildlife but are far less prevalent than on East palatka or Fosters holly.

General Information

Scientific name: *Ilex cassine*

Pronunciation: EYE-lecks kuh-SIGH-nee

Common name(s): Dahoon holly

Family: Aquifoliaceae

USDA hardiness zones: 7A through 11 (Figure 2)

Origin: native to the southeastern United States

UF/IFAS Invasive Assessment Status: native

Uses: hedge; screen; specimen; street without sidewalk; deck or patio; reclamation; sidewalk cutout (tree pit); tree

lawn 3–4 feet wide; tree lawn 4–6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft wide; urban tolerant; Bonsai; highway median; container or planter



Figure 1. Full Form—*Ilex cassine*: Dahoon holly
Credits: Ed Gilman

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Figure 2. Range

Description

Height: 20 to 30 feet

Spread: 8 to 12 feet

Crown uniformity: irregular

Crown shape: pyramidal, oval

Crown density: open

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire, serrate

Leaf shape: elliptic (oval), oblong

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches

Leaf color: dark green and shiny on top, paler green underneath

Fall color: no color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: male—greenish white; female—white

Flower characteristics: not showy; male—emerges in

branched clusters; female—emerges solitary or in clusters

Flowering: late spring to early summer

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: ¼ inch

Fruit covering: fleshy drupes

Fruit color: yellow, orange, or red

Fruit characteristics: attracts squirrels/mammals; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem



Figure 3. Leaf—*Ilex cassine*: Dahoon holly



Figure 4. Flower—*Ilex cassine*: Dahoon holly

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/branches: branches droop; not showy; typically multi-trunked; no thorns

Bark: dark gray, thin, and smooth, becoming scaly with age

Pruning requirement: little required

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: green

Current year twig thickness: medium

Wood specific gravity: unknown



Figure 5. Fruit—*Ilex cassine*: Dahoon holly



Figure 6. Bark—*Ilex cassine*: Dahoon holly
Credits: Gitta Hasing

Culture

Light requirement: full sun to partial shade

Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; slightly alkaline; acidic; wet to well-drained

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: no

Outstanding tree: no

Ozone sensitivity: unknown

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: resistant

Pest resistance: resistant to pests/diseases

Use and Management

Growing well in full sun to partial shade, dahoon holly does best on moist soils since the wet, boggy soils of swamps is its native environment. Dahoon holly can tolerate drier locations with some watering, but often has a thin crown in this environment. It is not recommended in the southern part of its range in a dry, exposed site unless irrigation is provided. It lends itself well to use as a specimen or street tree, and is ideal for naturalizing in moist locations. Little pruning is needed to create a well-structured, strong tree. It appears to adapt well to the confined spaces of urban and downtown landscapes and is tolerant of some salt spray. The crown is fuller in full sun.

Ilex cassine var. *angustifolia*, Alabama dahoon, has narrower, more linear leaves than the species and more abundant but smaller berries. *Ilex myrtifolia* has smaller leaves and fruit, and its cultivar 'Lowe' has yellow berries and dark green foliage.

Propagation is by seeds, which germinate in one year, or by cuttings. Cuttings are preferred since they give plants of a known sex and also root easily.

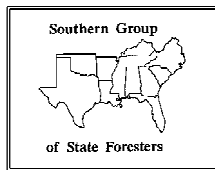
Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern. A twig gall sometimes forms in response to a fungus infection. Mites can infest foliage on trees planted on dry sites.

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Koeser, A. K., Hasing, G., Friedman, M. H., and Irving, R. B. 2015. Trees: North & Central Florida. Gainesville: University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

Koeser, A.K., Friedman, M.H., Hasing, G., Finley, H., Schelb, J. 2017. Trees: South Florida and the Keys. Gainesville: University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.



Juniperus virginiana Eastern Redcedar¹

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson²

INTRODUCTION

Redcedar is an evergreen growing 40 to 50 feet tall in an oval, columnar, or pyramidal form (very diverse) and spreading 8 to 15 feet when given a sunny location (Fig. 1). It develops a brownish tint in winter in the north and is sometimes used in windbreaks or screens. The fruit is a blue berry on female trees and is ornamental when produced in quantity. Birds devour the fruit and 'plant' it along farm fences and in old abandoned fields. Some botanists do not separate *J. virginiana* from *silicicola*.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Juniperus virginiana*

Pronunciation: joo-NIP-er-us ver-jin-ee-AY-nuh

Common name(s): Eastern Redcedar

Family: Cupressaceae

USDA hardiness zones: 2 through 9 (Fig. 2)

Origin: native to North America

Uses: Bonsai; wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; reclamation plant; screen; residential street tree; Christmas tree; tree has been successfully grown in urban areas where air pollution, poor drainage, compacted soil, and/or drought are common

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

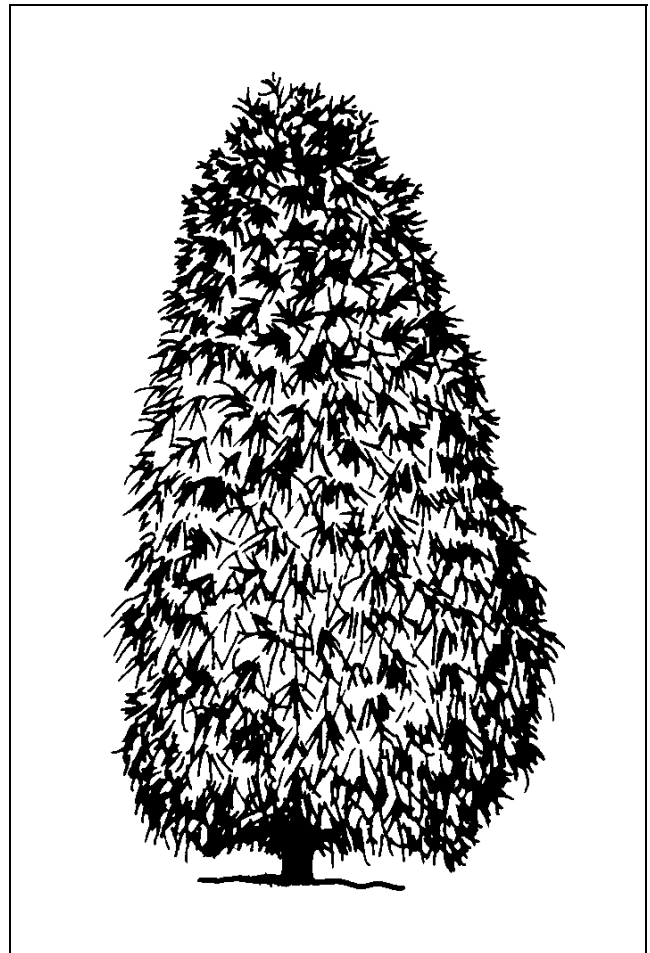


Figure 1. Middle-aged Eastern Redcedar.

DESCRIPTION

Height: 40 to 50 feet

Spread: 10 to 20 feet

1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-327, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: November 1993.
2. Edward F. Gilman, associate professor, Environmental Horticulture Department; Dennis G. Watson, associate professor, Agricultural Engineering Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611.



Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms

Crown shape: columnar; oval; pyramidal

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: fast

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite; whorled (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire; terminal spine

Leaf shape: awl-like; scale-like

Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: green; yellow

Flower characteristics: inconspicuous and not showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: < .5 inch

Fruit covering: fleshy

Fruit color: blue; purple

Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; no significant litter problem; persistent on the tree; showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; showy trunk; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns

Pruning requirement: needs little pruning to develop a strong structure

Breakage: susceptible to breakage either at the crotch due to poor collar formation, or the wood itself is weak and tends to break

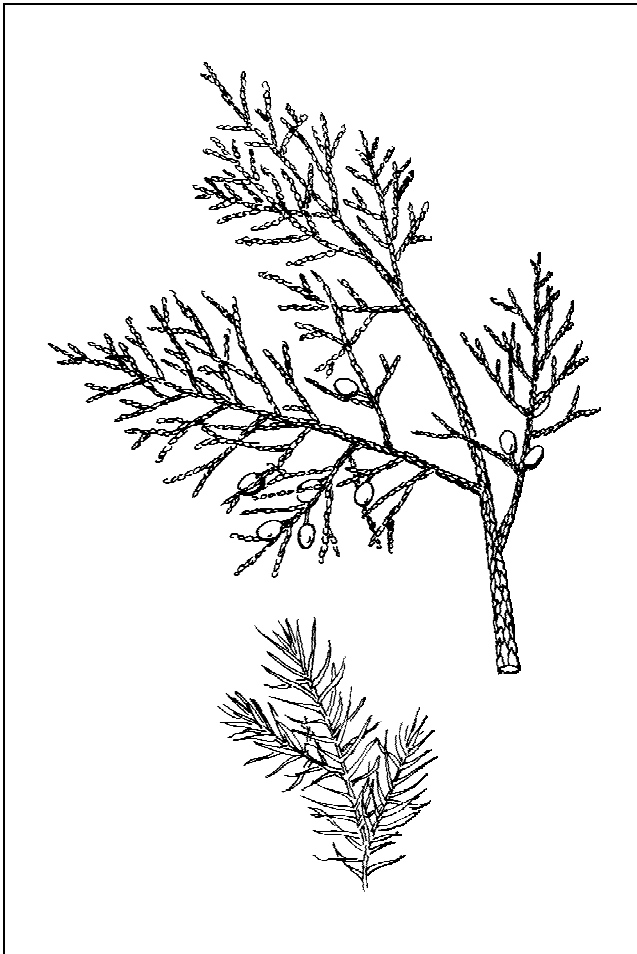


Figure 3. Foliage of Eastern Redcedar.

Current year twig color: brown; green

Current year twig thickness: thin

Wood specific gravity: 0.47

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in full sun

Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; acidic; alkaline; well-drained

Drought tolerance: high

Aerosol salt tolerance: high

Soil salt tolerance: moderate

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding tree: not particularly outstanding

Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time

Ozone sensitivity: tolerant

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: not known to be susceptible

Pest resistance: no pests are normally seen on the tree

USE AND MANAGEMENT

The dense growth and attractive foliage make Eastern Redcedar a favorite for windbreaks, screens, and wildlife-cover for large-scale landscapes. Its high salt-tolerance makes it ideal for seaside locations. Redcedar can make a nice Christmas tree, and the fragrant wood is popular for repelling insects. Although not currently used often as a street tree, its wood is strong, the foliage is clean, and the fruit is small making it a suitable candidate. There are some nice examples of street tree use in southern cities. With proper pruning to remove lower branches, it should adapt well to street-scapes.

Planted in full sun or partial shade, Eastern Redcedar will easily grow on a variety of soils, including clay, but will not do well on soils kept continually moist. Growth may be poor in landscapes which are over-irrigated. Plants are difficult to transplant due to a coarse root system, except when quite small. Water until well-established and then forget about the tree. It performs admirably with no care, even on alkaline soil and along the coast. Usually insects and diseases are not a problem if grown in the full sun. There may be local restrictions on planting this tree near apple orchards because it is the alternate host for cedar-apple rust.

Some nurseries carry a cultivar or two of redcedar.

Cultivars include: 'Burkii' - pyramidal, blue foliage, 15 to 25 feet tall; 'Canaertii' - compact, pyramidal, good fruit production, fairly common in Texas; 'Hillspire' - (cupressifolia) - good green color; 'Elegantissima' - Goldtip Redcedar - branchlets with yellow tips, less than 20 feet tall; 'Filifera' - pyramidal, branchlets divided, foliage gray green; 'Glaucua' - Silver Redcedar - narrow, columnar, 15 to 20 feet tall, silvery blue foliage especially in spring; 'Ketlerii' is commonly available in the mid-west, is more open with spaces between branches at the top of the tree, pyramidal; 'Manhattan Blue' - compact, 20 feet tall, pyramidal, foliage bluish green; 'Pendula' - Weeping Redcedar - branchlets pendulous, to 40 feet tall; 'Pyramidalis Dundee' - pyramidal, purplish green in winter; 'Skyrocket' - silver-blue foliage, narrow columnar form.

Pests

Usually none are serious.

Bagworm caterpillars occasionally web foliage and debris together to make bags up to two inches long. The insects live in the bags and emerge to feed on the foliage. Use sprays of *Bacillus thuringiensis*. The insects can also be picked off the plants by hand.

Juniper scale causes yellowed needles, and infected branches fail to produce new growth. The scale is round and at first white, later turning gray or black.

The Juniper webworm webs twigs and needles together, causing them to brown and die. The larva is 1/2-inch-long and is brown with darker stripes. The larvae are often in the densest part of the plant and can go unnoticed.

Mites cause stippled and bronzed foliage.

Diseases

Twig blights cause death and browning of twigs tips. The diseases may progress down the stem killing the whole branch. Small lesions may be seen at the base of dead tissue. Prune out dead branch tips. Dieback from Kabatina blight appears in early spring, from Phomopsis in summer.

Three rust diseases seen most often are cedar-apple rust, hawthorn rust, and quince rust. The most common is cedar-apple rust. On Juniper the first two diseases form galls and orange jelly-like horns in spring. The horns are most likely to form following periods of rainy, warm weather. Spores formed in the horns infect the alternate host. The diseases are more serious on the alternate host than Juniper. There may be local restrictions on planting this tree near apple orchards because it is the alternate host for cedar-apple rust. A separation of a few hundred yards may help avoid the disease. Prune out the spore horns when seen in the spring. Do not plant near hawthorns, apples, or crabapples.

Junipers are not tolerant of ice coatings. Expect dieback when Junipers are covered with ice for several days. Removing the ice is impractical.

Red mulberry

Morus rubra

Moraceae

Landscape Uses:

Primarily recommended for natural landscapes and habitat restorations. It can also be an attractive accent tree in parks and large residential yards.

Ecological Restoration Notes:

An occasional element of hammocks on the mainland.

Availability:

Commonly available at native plant nurseries in central Florida. Available at native plant nurseries in northeast Florida. Available at [Indian Trails Native Nursery](#) in Lake Worth (561-641-9488).

Description:

Medium to large tree with broad, rounded, dense crowns composed of wide-spreading branches. Trunks are usually short, soon branching, 6-18 inches in diameter. Bark grayish or reddish brown, divided and peeling. Leaves dark green above, paler beneath, 3-5 inches long, thin, rough above. Temperate deciduous, usually losing its leaves in the winter.

Height:

Typically 30-40 feet in height in South Florida; to 58 feet in Florida. As broad as tall or broader.

Growth Rate:

Fast.

Range:

Eastern North America west to Texas and south to Miami-Dade County and the Monroe County mainland. For a digitized image of Elbert Little's Florida range map, visit the [Exploring Florida](#) website. Note: Little's map shows the main range of this ending in northern Miami-Dade County with a disjunct population presumably representing Royal Palm Hammock in Everglades National Park. In fact, the natural range of this continues from northern Miami-Dade throughout most of the Miami Rock Ridge and into the park.

Habitats:

Moist forests.

Soils:

Moist to wet, moderately well-drained to well-drained sandy or limestone soils, with humusy top layer.

Nutritional Requirements:

Moderate; can grow in nutrient poor soils, but needs some organic content to thrive.

Salt Water Tolerance:

Low; does not tolerate flooding by salt or brackish water.

Salt Wind Tolerance:

Moderate; grows near salt water, but is protected from direct salt spray by other vegetation.

Drought Tolerance:

Moderate; generally requires moist soils, but tolerant of short periods of drought once established.

Light Requirements:

Full sun.

Flower Color:

Greenish-white.

Flower Characteristics:

Inconspicuous on long slender catkins. Partly dioecious, but with sufficient male flowers present on female trees to ensure reasonable fertilization. Pollination is by wind.

Flowering Season:

Winter-summer; peak in early spring.

Fruit:

Compound juicy berry, about 1" long, turning purple to black when ripe. Mostly late spring. Edible, sweet.



Susan Trammell



George D. Gann



George D. Gann



George D. Gann

Wildlife and Ecology:

Provides food and cover for wildlife. Many species of birds and other animals eat the fruits.

Horticultural Notes:

Can be grown from semi-hardwood cuttings under mist.

Comments:

The fruit is very tasty and can be eaten raw or used to make jelly, syrup or pie filling. The tree can look unsightly just before and during leaf fall as the leaves are attacked by chewing insects.



Jay Horn via [iNaturalist](#).



Jay Horn via [iNaturalist](#).

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Woodmansee, K.A. Bradley, E. Grahl and K.N. Hines. 2005-2016.
Natives For Your Neighborhood. <http://www.regionalconservation.org>.
The Institute for Regional Conservation. Delray Beach, Florida USA.

Acer rubrum: Red Maple¹

Edward F. Gilman, Dennis G. Watson, Ryan W. Klein, Andrew K. Koeser, Deborah R. Hilbert and Drew C. McLean²

Introduction

Red maple has an oval shape and is a fast grower with strong wood, reaching a height of 75 feet. Unless irrigated or on a wet site, Red maple is best used north of USDA hardiness zone 9. Trees are often much shorter in the southern part of its range unless growing next to a stream or on a wet site. This tree is preferred over Silver maple or Boxelder when a fast growing maple is needed. When planting the species *Acer rubrum*, select only those which have been grown from seed sources in your area. The newly emerging leaves and red flowers and fruits signal that spring has come. They appear in December and January in Florida, later in the northern part of its range. The seeds of Red maple are quite popular with squirrels and birds. This tree is sometimes confused with red-leaved cultivars of Norway maple.

General Information

Scientific name: *Acer rubrum*

Pronunciation: AY-ser ROO-brum

Common name(s): red maple, swamp maple

Family: sapindaceae

USDA hardiness zones: 4A through 9B (Figure 2)

Origin: native to the Eastern United States, neighboring Canadian provinces, and Newfoundland

UF/IFAS Invasive Assessment Status: native



Figure 1. Full Form - *Acer rubrum*: red maple
Credits: Gitta Hasing, UF/IFAS

Uses: reclamation; highway median; screen; shade; street without sidewalk; deck or patio; tree lawn 4–6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft. wide; bonsai

1. This document is ENH-200, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date November 1993. Revised December 2018. Visit the EDIS website at <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu> for the currently supported version of this publication.
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Figure 2. Range

Description

Height: 60 to 75 feet

Spread: 25 to 35 feet

Crown uniformity: irregular

Crown shape: oval, round, upright/erect

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: fast

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite (Figure 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: incised, serrate, lobed

Leaf shape: ovate

Leaf venation: palmate

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: 2 to 5 inches

Leaf color: medium to dark green on top; grayish to silver underneath

Fall color: yellow, red, purple

Fall characteristic: showy



Figure 3. Leaf - *Acer rubrum*: red maple
Credits: Gitta Hasing, UF/IFAS

Flower

Flower color: red or pink

Flower characteristics: showy; emerges in clusters

Flowering: late winter to early spring, before new leaves emerge



Figure 4. Flower - *Acer rubrum*: red maple
Credits: Gitta Hasing, UF/IFAS

Fruit

Fruit shape: elongated 2-winged samara

Fruit length: $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 inch

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: pinkish to reddish

Fruit characteristics: attracts squirrels/mammals; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

Fruiting: spring

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/branches: branches droop; not showy; typically one trunk; no thorns

Bark: light gray and smooth, becoming dark gray, rough, ridged, and furrowed with age

Pruning requirement: needed for strong structure

Breakage: susceptible to breakage

Current year twig color: gray, reddish

Current year twig thickness: medium

Wood specific gravity: 0.54



Figure 5. Fruit - *Acer rubrum*: red maple
Credits: Gitta Hasing, UF/IFAS

Culture

Light requirement: full sun, partial sun or partial shade
Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; acidic; extended flooding; well-drained
Drought tolerance: moderate
Aerosol salt tolerance: low

Other

Roots: can form large surface roots
Winter interest: yes
Outstanding tree: no
Ozone sensitivity: tolerant
Verticillium wilt susceptibility: susceptible
Pest resistance: resistant to pests/diseases

Use and Management

The outstanding ornamental characteristic of Red maple is red, orange, or yellow fall color (sometimes on the same tree) lasting several weeks. Red maple is often one of the first trees to color up in autumn, and it puts on one of the most brilliant displays of any tree, but trees vary greatly in fall color and intensity. Cultivars are more consistently colored.

The tree makes the best growth in wet places and has no other particular soil preference, except chlorosis may develop on alkaline soil where it also grows poorly. It is well suited as a street tree in northern and mid-south climates in residential and other suburban areas, but the bark is thin and easily damaged by mowers. Irrigation is often needed to support street tree plantings in well-drained soil in the south. Roots can raise sidewalks as silver maples can, but they have a less aggressive root system and so they make a good street tree. Surface roots beneath the canopy can make mowing difficult.

Red maple is easily transplanted and usually develops surface roots in soil ranging from well-drained sand to clay. It is not especially drought-tolerant, particularly in the southern part of the range, but selected individual trees can be found growing on dry sites. This trait shows the wide range of genetic diversity in the species. Branches often grow upright through the crown, forming poor attachments to the trunk. These should be removed in the nursery or after planting in the landscape to help prevent branch failure in older trees during storms. Select branches with a wide angle from the trunk and prevent branches from growing larger than half the diameter of the trunk.



Figure 6. Bark - *Acer rubrum*: red maple
Credits: Gitta Hasing, UF/IFAS

A number of cultivars are listed. Due to graft-incompatibility problems that cause the tree to break apart, preference should be given to cultivars produced on their own roots. In the northern and southern end of the range, choose cultivars with regional adaptation. The cultivars are 'Armstrong'—upright growth habit, almost columnar, somewhat prone to splitting branches due to tight crotches, 50 feet tall; 'Autumn Flame'—45 feet tall, round, above average fall color; 'Bowhall'—upright growth habit, branches form embedded bark, graft incompatibility on grafted trees; 'Gerling'—densely branched, broadly pyramidal, about 35 feet tall when mature; 'October Glory'—above average fall color, excellent tree, retains leaves late, 60 feet tall; 'Red Sunset'—above average orange to red fall color, does well in the south in USDA hardiness zone 8, probably the best cultivar for the deep south, oval, 50 feet tall; 'Scanlon'—upright growth habit; 'Schlesinger'—good fall color, rapid growth rate; 'Tilford'—globe-shaped crown. Variety *drummondii* suitable in USDA hardiness zone 8.

There is a recently introduced hybrid cross between red and silver maple called hybrid maple (x). Cultivars of this hybrid include 'Armstrong' with a narrow columnar crown to 35 feet tall, 'Autumn Blaze' with an oval crown to 50 feet tall, 'Celebration' with a narrow upright crown and a strong central leader to 50 or 60 feet tall, 'Celzam' with a narrow oval crown to 50 feet tall, and 'Scarlet Sentinel' with great fall color, and oval crown to 40 feet tall. The culture of these trees is probably similar to Red maple.

Pests

Leaf stalk borer and petiole borer cause the same type of injury. Both insects bore into the leaf stalk just below the leaf blade. The leaf stalk shrivels, turns black, and the leaf blade falls off. The leaf drop may appear heavy but serious injury to a healthy tree is rare.

Gall mites stimulate the formation of growths or galls on the leaves. The galls are small but can be so numerous that individual leaves curl up. The most common gall is bladder gall mite found on silver maple. The galls are round and at first green but later turn red, then black, then dry up. Galls of other shapes are seen less frequently on other types of maples. Galls are not serious, so chemical controls are not needed.

Crimson erineum mite is usually found on silver maple and causes the formation of red fuzzy patches on the lower leaf surfaces. The problem is not serious so control measures are not suggested.

Aphids infest maples, usually Norway maple, and may be numerous at times. High populations can cause leaf drop. Another sign of heavy aphid infestation is honey dew on lower leaves and objects beneath the tree. Aphids are controlled by spraying or they may be left alone. If not sprayed, predatory insects will bring the aphid population under control.

Scales are an occasional problem on maples. Perhaps the most common is cottony maple scale. The insect forms a cottony mass on the lower sides of branches. Scales are usually controlled with horticultural oil sprays. Scales may also be controlled with well-timed sprays to kill the crawlers.

If borers become a problem it is an indication the tree is not growing well. Controlling borers involves keeping trees healthy. Chemical controls of existing infestations are more difficult. Proper control involves identification of the borer infesting the tree then applying insecticides at the proper time.

Twig borers can cause die-back of the terminal 8 to 12 inches of small-diameter branches. This is usually not serious and does not require control measures, but it can be a problem on young trees in the nursery.

Diseases

Anthracnose is more of a problem in rainy seasons. The disease resembles, and may be confused with, a physiological problem called "scorch". The disease causes light brown or tan areas on the leaves. Anthracnose may be controlled by fungicides sprayed on as leaves open in the spring. Two additional sprays at two-week intervals will be needed. The disease is most common on sugar and silver maples and boxelder. Other maples may not be affected as severely. Sprays may need to be applied by a commercial applicator having proper spray equipment.

Scorch may occur during periods of high temperatures accompanied by wind. Trees with diseased or inadequate root systems will also show scorching. When trees do not get enough water they scorch. Scorch symptoms are light brown or tan dead areas between leaf veins. The symptoms are on all parts of the tree or only on the side exposed to sun and wind. Scorching due to dry soil may be overcome by watering. If scorching is due to an inadequate or diseased root system, watering may have no effect.

Nutrient deficiency symptoms are yellow or yellowish-green leaves with darker green veins. The most commonly deficient nutrient on maple is manganese. Implanting capsules containing a manganese source in the trunk will

alleviate the symptoms. Test soil samples to determine if the soil pH is too high for best manganese availability. Plants exposed to weed killers may also show similar symptoms.

Tar spot and a variety of leaf spots cause some concern among homeowners but are rarely serious enough for control.

Additionally, girdling roots (a defect, not a disease) can cause issues. Girdling roots grow around the base of the trunk rather than growing away from it. As both root and trunk increase in size, the root chokes the trunk. Girdling roots are detected by examining the base of the trunk. The lack of trunk flare at ground level is a symptom. The portion of the trunk above a girdling root does not grow as rapidly as the rest so may be slightly depressed. The offending root may be on the surface or may be just below the sod. The tree crown shows premature fall coloration and death of parts of the tree in more serious cases. If large portions of the tree have died it may not be worth saving. Girdling roots are functional roots so when removed a portion of the tree may die. When the girdling root is large the treatment is as harmful as the problem. After root removal, follow-up treatment includes watering during dry weather. The best treatment for girdling roots is prevention by removing or cutting circling roots at planting or as soon as they are detected on young trees.

Reference

Koeser, A. K., Hasing, G., Friedman, M. H., and Irving, R. B. 2015. Trees: North & Central Florida. University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

Betula nigra: River Birch¹

Edward F. Gilman, Dennis G. Watson, Ryan W. Klein, Andrew K. Koeser, Deborah R. Hilbert, and Drew C. McLean²

Introduction

River birch can grow 50 to 90 feet tall but is often seen 40 to 50 feet. It normally grows with a central leader and small-diameter, dark-colored lateral branches. It has a narrow, oval to pyramidal crown when young, spreading wider with age as several branches become dominant. It lacks the white trunk bark associated with other birches but is distinguished by reddish-brown bark peeling off in film-like papery curls providing interest all year round. River birch can be easily trained with one central leader or as a multi-stemmed tree. Some nurseries plant two or three trees together to form a clump, but these trunks will not fuse into one strong trunk. Should be grown more as a single-trunked specimen. Branches droop particularly when they are wet, so regular pruning in the early years will be required to remove lower branches when they are located close to areas where clearance is needed for vehicular traffic.

General Information

Scientific name: *Betula nigra*

Pronunciation: BET-yoo-luh NYE-gruh

Common name(s): river birch

Family: *Betulaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 4A through 9A (Figure 2)



Figure 1. Full Form - *Betula nigra*: river birch
Credits: Gitta Hasing, UF/IFAS

1. This document is ENH253, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date November 1993. Revised December 2018. Visit the EDIS website at <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu> for the currently supported version of this publication.
2. Edward F. Gilman, professor emeritus, Environmental Horticulture Department; Dennis G. Watson, former associate professor, Agricultural Engineering Department; Ryan W. Klein, graduate assistant, Environmental Horticulture Department, Gainesville, FL 32611; Andrew K. Koeser, assistant professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center (GCRC), Wimauma, FL 33598; Deborah R. Hilbert, graduate assistant, Environmental Horticulture Department, GCRC; and Drew C. McLean, biological scientist, Environmental Horticulture Department, GCRC; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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Origin: native to the southeastern United States, including adjacent northern states, and the northern range of the Mississippi River

UF/IFAS Invasive Assessment Status: native

Uses: hedge; street without sidewalk; screen; shade; specimen; deck or patio



Figure 2. Range

Description

Height: 40 to 50 feet

Spread: 25 to 35 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical

Crown shape: upright/erect, pyramidal, oval

Crown density: dense

Growth rate: fast

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Figure 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: double serrate



Figure 3. Leaf - *Betula nigra*: river birch
Credits: Gitta Hasing, UF/IFAS

Leaf shape: rhomboid, ovate

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: 1 to 4 inches

Leaf color: dark green on top, paler green underneath

Fall color: yellow

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: brown

Flower characteristics: not showy

Flowering: mid spring

Fruit

Fruit shape: elongated

Fruit length: 1 to 1 ½ inches

Fruit covering: dry or hard; cone-like catkin with many winged nutlets

Fruit color: reddish-brown

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; not showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

Fruiting: matures in the fall



Figure 4. Fruit - *Betula nigra*: river birch
Credits: Gitta Hasing, UF/IFAS

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/branches: branches droop; very showy; typically multi-trunked; no thorns

Bark: reddish brown to creamy yellow and smooth, becoming papery and flaking or peeling off in large, curling plates with age

Pruning requirement: little required
Breakage: resistant
Current year twig color: reddish, brown
Current year twig thickness: thin
Wood specific gravity: unknown



Figure 5. Bark - *Betula nigra*: river birch
Credits: Gary Kling, UF/IFAS

Culture

Light requirement: full sun to partial shade
Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; acidic; wet to well-drained
Drought tolerance: moderate
Aerosol salt tolerance: low

Other

Roots: not a problem
Winter interest: yes
Outstanding tree: yes
Ozone sensitivity: tolerant
Verticillium wilt susceptibility: resistant
Pest resistance: resistant to pests/diseases

Use and Management

It is very well suited for planting along stream banks where it is native and in other areas that are inundated for weeks. River birch tolerates low soil oxygen, flooding, and clay soil, but needs moist conditions. The tree requires an acid soil, otherwise it becomes chlorotic. River birch is hardy, grows rapidly, but tends to be short-lived (30 to 40 years) in many urban settings, possibly due to inadequate water supply. Situate the tree so it receives adequate water. Large trees are prone to trunk decay. Not a tree to plant and forget due to irrigation requirement.

The tree is not as susceptible to bronze birch borer as are other birches. It is not particularly adapted to heat but can make a nice tree in USDA hardiness zone 8b, possibly 9a, if provided with irrigation and plenty of soil space. Not for confined street tree pits or tree lawns in the South. The yellow fall color display is of short duration.

The cultivar 'Heritage' grows 50 feet tall, has an oval shape and scaly bark that is beige in color, and is the closest to a paper white birch that will survive in hot areas; it grows from Minnesota to Florida. It is also tolerant of poor drainage. It is reportedly resistant to bronze birch borer and unlike most birches it is resistant to leaf spot. It is more vigorous than the species.

Pests

No pests are of major concern. Resistant to bronze birch borer.

Diseases

Leaf spots; chlorosis on soils with a high pH.

Reference

Koeser, A. K., Hasing, G., Friedman, M. H., and Irving, R. B. 2015. Trees: North & Central Florida. University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

Magnolia virginiana: Sweetbay Magnolia¹

Edward F. Gilman, Dennis G. Watson, Ryan W. Klein, Andrew K. Koeser, Deborah R. Hilbert, and Drew C. McLean²

Introduction

Sweetbay magnolia is a graceful southern, evergreen to semi-evergreen, wide columnar tree, ideal for use as a patio tree or specimen. It can grow to a mature height of 50 feet in the north or to 60 feet in the south. Trees glimmer in the wind due to the whitish-green undersides of the leaves. They are very noticeable as you drive by them on interstates along water-logged woodlands. The tree provides excellent vertical definition in a shrub border or as a free-standing specimen and flourishes in moist, acid soil such as the swamps in the eastern U.S. and along stream banks. The creamy-white, lemon-scented flowers appear from June through September, and are followed by small red seeds which are used by a variety of wildlife. It can be trained into a multi-trunked, spreading specimen plant, or left with the central leader intact as a wide column.

General Information

Scientific name:

Pronunciation: mag-NO-lee-uh ver-jin-ee-AY-nuh

Common name(s): sweetbay magnolia, swamp magnolia

Family: *Magnoliaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 5A through 10A (Figure 2)

Origin: native to the Gulf and Atlantic Coastal Plains, from East Texas to New York

UF/IFAS Invasive Assessment Status: native



Figure 1. Full Form - *Magnolia virginiana*: sweetbay magnolia
Credits: UF/IFAS

1. This document is ENH-543, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date November 1993. Revised December 2018. Visit the EDIS website at <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu> for the currently supported version of this publication.
2. Edward F. Gilman, professor emeritus, Environmental Horticulture Department; Dennis G. Watson, former associate professor, Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering Department; Ryan W. Klein, graduate assistant, Environmental Horticulture Department; Andrew K. Koeser, assistant professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center; Deborah R. Hilbert, graduate assistant, Environmental Horticulture Department, GCREC; and Drew C. McLean, biological scientist, Environmental Horticulture Department, GCREC; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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Uses: deck or patio; specimen; street without sidewalk; espalier; tree lawn 4-6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft wide; highway median



Figure 2. Range

Description

Height: 40 to 50 feet
Spread: 15 to 25 feet
Crown uniformity: symmetrical
Crown shape: columnar, vase
Crown density: moderate
Growth rate: moderate
Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate
Leaf type: simple



Figure 3. Leaf, Top - *Magnolia virginiana*: sweetbay magnolia
Credits: UF/IFAS

Leaf margin: entire
Leaf shape: elliptic (oval), oblong
Leaf venation: brachidodrome, pinnate
Leaf type and persistence: deciduous, semi-evergreen, evergreen
Leaf blade length: 2 ½ to 6 inches
Leaf color: green to dark yellow on top, silvery white underneath
Fall color: no color change
Fall characteristic: not showy



Figure 4. Leaf, Under - *Magnolia virginiana*: sweetbay magnolia
Credits: UF/IFAS

Flower

Flower color: creamy white
Flower characteristics: very showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: ovoid; cone-like
Fruit length: 2 inches
Fruit covering: dry or hard
Fruit color: red to brown with maturity
Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem
Fruiting: late summer

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/branches: branches don't droop; showy; typically multi-trunked; no thorns
Bark: reddish brown to pale gray, smooth, and becoming rough with age



Figure 5. Flower - *Magnolia virginiana*: sweetbay magnolia
Credits: UF/IFAS

Pruning requirement: little required

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: green

Current year twig thickness: thin

Wood specific gravity: unknown



Figure 6. Bark, Young - *Magnolia virginiana*: sweetbay magnolia
Credits: UF/IFAS

Culture

Light requirement: full sun to partial shade

Soil tolerances: sand; loam; clay; acidic; wet to well-drained

Drought tolerance: low

Aerosol salt tolerance: low



Figure 7. Bark, Mature - *Magnolia virginiana*: sweetbay magnolia
Credits: Gitta Hasing, UF/IFAS

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: no

Outstanding tree: yes

Ozone sensitivity: tolerant

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: susceptible

Pest resistance: resistant to pests/diseases

Use and Management

Sweetbay magnolia makes an excellent tree for planting next to buildings, in narrow alleys or corridors, or in other urban areas with limited space for horizontal crown expansion. It has not been planted extensively in downtown urban areas, but its flood and drought tolerance and narrow crown combine to make it a good candidate. It usually maintains a good, straight central leader, although occasionally the trunk branches low to the ground forming a round multi-stemmed, spreading tree. It should be grown and planted more often.

Sweetbay magnolia roots easily from softwood cuttings, grows freely near coastal areas, and is happiest in southern climates. It is thriving in the Auburn Shade Tree Evaluation trials in Alabama without irrigation. However, in the confined soil spaces typical of some urban areas, occasional irrigation is recommended.

The species is deciduous in USDA hardiness zones 7 and 8 (evergreen farther south), but the variety *australis* and cultivar ‘Henry Hicks’ are evergreen. ‘Havener’ has larger flower petals.

Pests and Diseases

Scales sometimes infest foliage and twigs, particularly on dry sites where the tree is under stress.

Tulip-poplar weevil (sassafras weevil) feeds as a leaf miner when young and chews holes in the leaves as an adult.

Leaf spots occasionally occur on the foliage but are of little concern.

References

Koeser, A. K., Hasing, G., Friedman, M. H., and Irving, R. B. 2015. Trees: North & Central Florida. University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

Koeser, A.K., Friedman, M.H., Hasing, G., Finley, H., Schelb, J. 2017. Trees: South Florida and the Keys. University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

Platanus occidentalis: Sycamore¹

Edward F. Gilman, Dennis G. Watson, Ryan W. Klein, Andrew K. Koeser, Deborah R. Hilbert, and Drew C. McLean²

Introduction

Sycamore is a massive tree reaching 75 to 90 feet in height, has a rapid growth rate, and tolerates wet and compacted soil. The white bark peels off in patches and is the most ornamental trait. Pyramidal in youth, it develops a spreading rounded or irregular crown with age, supported by a few very large diameter branches. These branches should be spaced two to four feet apart along the trunk to develop a strong structure. The dominant central leader which typically develops on Sycamore usually assures that the structure of major limbs is desirable with little corrective pruning required other than removing occasionally-occurring, upright, aggressive branches with tight crotches. It is also helpful to thin out the many branches which develop early on the central trunk.

General Information

Scientific name: *Platanus occidentalis*

Pronunciation: PLAT-uh-nus ock-sih-den-TAY-liss

Common name(s): sycamore, American planetree

Family: *Platanaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 4B through 9A (Figure 2)

Origin: native to the eastern half of the United States and southern Ontario

UF/IFAS Invasive Assessment Status: native

Uses: street without sidewalk; screen; shade; parking lot island > 200 sq ft; sidewalk cutout (tree pit); tree lawn > 6 ft wide; urban tolerant; highway median



Figure 1. Full Form - *Platanus occidentalis*: sycamore

Credits: UF/IFAS

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Figure 2. Range

Description

Height: 75 to 90 feet

Spread: 50 to 70 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical

Crown shape: pyramidal, round, spreading

Crown density: dense

Growth rate: fast

Texture: coarse

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: lobed, incised

Leaf shape: ovate, star-shaped

Leaf venation: palmate, pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: 4 to 9 inches

Leaf color: bright green and smooth on top, paler green and pubescent underneath

Fall color: yellow

Fall characteristic: not showy



Figure 3. Leaf - *Platanus occidentalis*: sycamore
Credits: UF/IFAS



Figure 4. Canopy - *Platanus occidentalis*: sycamore
Credits: UF/IFAS

Flower

Flower color: red

Flower characteristics: not showy; borne in compact, dense clusters on a spherical head

Flowering: spring



Figure 5. Flower - *Platanus occidentalis*: sycamore
Credits: UF/IFAS

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: ½ to 1 inch

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: brown

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; showy; fruit/leaves a litter problem; globulose cluster of achenes

Fruiting: ripens in late fall to early winter



Figure 6. Fruit, Young - *Platanus occidentalis*: sycamore
Credits: UF/IFAS



Figure 7. Fruit, Mature - *Platanus occidentalis*: sycamore
Credits: UF/IFAS

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/branches: branches droop; showy; typically one trunk; no thorns

Bark: white and sloughing off in thin, irregular plates to reveal green, tan, cream, and brown inner bark

Pruning requirement: little required

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: brown

Current year twig thickness: medium

Wood specific gravity: 0.49



Figure 8. Bark - *Platanus occidentalis*: sycamore
Credits: Gitta Hasing, UF/IFAS

Culture

Light requirement: full sun

Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; alkaline; acidic; wet to well-drained

Drought tolerance: high

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

Other

Roots: can form large surface roots

Winter interest: yes

Outstanding tree: no

Ozone sensitivity: sensitive

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: resistant

Pest resistance: sensitive to pests/diseases

Use and Management

They are best suited for soils which are moist and do not dry out. Dry soil can lead to short life for this wet-site-tolerant tree. Sycamore has been cursed by horticulturists and others because it is said to be messy, dropping leaves and small twigs throughout the year, particularly in dry weather. However, the tree grows in places which appear most unsuitable to plant growth, such as in small cut out planting pits in sidewalks and in other areas with low soil oxygen and high pH. Unfortunately, aggressive roots often raise and destroy nearby sidewalks. The dense shade created by the tree's canopy may interfere with the growth of lawn grasses beneath it. In addition, the leaves which fall to the ground in autumn reportedly release a substance which can kill newly planted grass. Best not planted in yards due to messy habit, it should be saved for the toughest sites and supplied with some irrigation in drought. Allow at least 12 feet (preferably more) of soil between the sidewalk and curb when planting as a street tree.

Sycamore is subject to attacks of anthracnose in wet, cool springs. The disease causes moderate to severe leaf drop and many trees are removed with this disease each year in our major cities. Many trees also defoliate early in the fall due to lace bug infestation. Therefore, do not overplant with Sycamore since they are so prone to problems.

The National Arboretum in 1984 released two selections of *Platanus occidentalis* x *Platanus orientalis* which could prove to be superior to the parents: *Platanus* x *acerifolia* 'Columbia' - upright, orange-grey bark, five-lobed leaves; *Platanus* x *acerifolia* 'Liberty' - upright pyramid, five-lobed leaves, reportedly more resistant to powdery mildew and anthracnose, though not immune.

Propagation is by seed, cultivars by hard or soft wood cuttings.

Pests

Aphids will suck the sap from Sycamore. Heavy infestations deposit honeydew on lower leaves and objects beneath the tree, such as cars and sidewalks. These infestations usually do no real harm to the tree but the sticky honeydew and black sooty mold below can be annoying.

Sycamore lace bugs feed on the undersides of the leaves causing a stippled appearance. The insects leave black flecks on the lower leaf surface, and cause premature defoliation in late summer and early fall.

Sycamore is considered resistant to gypsy moth.

Diseases

Some fungi cause leaf spots but are usually not serious.

Anthracnose causes early symptoms on young leaves resembling frost injury. When the leaves are almost fully grown light brown areas appear along the veins. Later the infected leaves fall off and trees may be nearly completely defoliated. The disease can cause twig and branch cankers. The trees send out a second crop of leaves but repeated attacks can lower tree vigor. Use a properly labeled fungicide according to the latest recommendations. Fertilization helps trees withstand repeated defoliation.

Powdery mildew causes a white fuzz on the tops of leaves and distorts leaves.

A bacterial leaf scorch can kill the tree in several growing seasons, and can cause significant tree losses. Leaves appear scorched, become crisp, and curl up as they turn a reddish-brown.

Stress cankers form on limbs of trees stressed with drought.

Reference

Koeser, A. K., Hasing, G., Friedman, M. H., and Irving, R. B. 2015. Trees: North & Central Florida. University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

Thank you for reviewing the Fact Sheets for the tree species available (while supplies last) for the Adopt-A-Tree free tree drive-thru events.

When completing your online reservation form, insert the validation code shown below in the space provided on the reservation form. The validation code is required to reserve free tree(s).

The Spring 2026 Validation Code you need to enter on the tree reservation online form is:

2026SPRING

The code above is case sensitive so be sure to capitalize the letters at the beginning and enter the code without spaces.



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