

**Red Maple, Swamp Maple**

*Acer rubrum*



**GENERAL DESCRIPTION:** This is the tree that provides the brilliant reds seen in the magnificent fall foliage displays such as those in Vermont and the rest of New England. It is a native tree of the deciduous woods and is now being used more as a street tree to replace the Norway Maple. From a pyramidal or elliptical outline when young it develops a rounded or irregular outline at maturity. This can be a fairly large tree but it is less spreading than the Norway Maple. The red spring flowers and the red leaf petioles are an indicator of the potential for fall color. The smooth gray bark is a pleasant winter feature.

**HABIT AND SIZE:** Pyramidal when young becoming rounded with age. Grows to 60-80' tall and about half as wide. A rapid growing tree 10-12' in 5-7 years.

**LANDSCAPE VALUE:** The more pyramidal habit and limited spread makes this an excellent candidate for street side plantings. It still makes a good shade tree. The rapid growth fresh leaf color and particularly its fall foliage contribute to make this a maple of choice for urban landscapes. The subsurface root system similar to Norway Maples is something to consider.

**LEAVES:** Opposite, simple 2-4" in both length and width with 3 major lobes and often with 2 more minor lobes and red 2-4" petioles. Secondary irregular dentation present. Color is medium to dark green with a grey green underside and hairy veins. Very young leaves often red.

**FLOWERS:** Pendulous corymbs of small red complete flowers with red calyx and corolla parts. Stamens 5, 2 lobed ovary and 2 fuzzy stigma/ styles.

**FRUIT:** Reddish samara with wings at a 60 degree angle 0.25" wide and 0.75" long.

**BUD:** Small (.0125") long red to green in color with several overlapping scales and blunt. Flower buds in clusters around the nodes more rounded edges of scales finely hairy.

**DISEASES AND INSECTS:** Leaf hoppers can be a significant problem and borers attacking the young terminal stems.

**HARDINESS AND RANGE:** Zones 3-9. Newfoundland to Florida west to Minnesota and Texas. Plants from southern populations not so cold hardy as from northern populations.

**CULTIVARS:** 'Armstrong' and 'Bowhall'-more columnar/pyramidal. 'October glory' and 'Red Sunset' -excellent orange red to red fall color.