

Sugar Maple (*acer saccharum*)

Hardiness zones: 4-8

Height: 50-75 feet

Spread: 30-45 feet

Flower color: greenish yellow

Fall color: yellow and orange

Soil moisture: medium to wet

Soil type: various

Light: full sun to part shade

Growth rate: slow

Shape: conical to round

Drought tolerance: moderate

Sugar maple, sometimes called “hard maple” or “rock maple”, is one of the largest and most important of the hardwoods. This deciduous Missouri native tree is one of the hardest of the maples, and is prized for both furniture making and flooring. It also produces some of the showiest autumn foliage bursting into hues of yellow and orange. Most individuals, however, are more familiar with what this tree can produce...maple syrup!



A dense crown makes this an excellent shade tree.



Color cycle of the sugar maple leaf



Tree form Sweetbay Magnolia

Sugar maples will rarely flower before they are approximately 22 years old and the flowers will reach full bloom (below right) about one to two weeks before the leaves emerge, between late March and mid-May. The fruit of the tree is the familiar two-winged samara (below center). But the most striking feature of this tree is its multicolored fall foliage as seen in the above photographs. Colors can include deep purples, brilliant reds, vibrant oranges and vivid yellows.



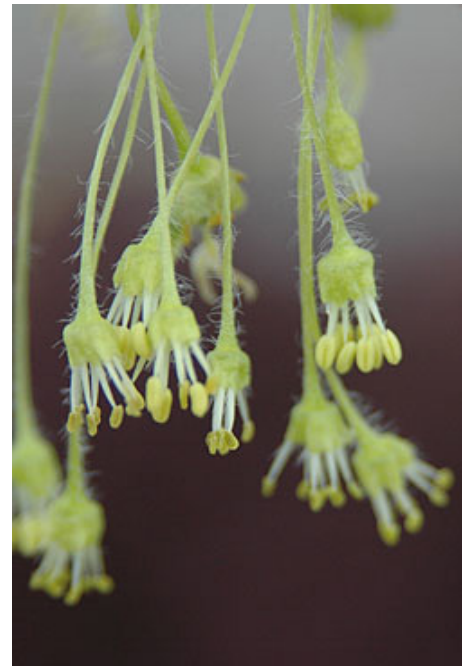
A palette of fall colors on the sugar maple



Green seeds belie the future explosion of color

The sugar maple is easily grown in a variety of moisture conditions, soil types and full sun to part shade. It tolerates shade better than most maple varieties. Its branches are strong and rarely break in wind or ice. This specimen will develop a rounded dense crown and makes an excellent shade tree that has no serious insect or disease problems.

The sugar maple has a lot to offer those inclined to plant this beautiful tree; a nesting spot for songbirds, relatively carefree maintenance, dense shade from the summer heat and some of the most brilliant fall color available. This tree is guaranteed to stand out from the rest.



Flowers develop just before the leaves emerge.