

SUGAR MAPLE (*Acer saccharum*)

Native hardwood. Also called Rock Maple.
State tree of VT, NY, WV, and WI.

Range: Zones 3-8. Canada to TN, west to IA and MN. Sun to partial shade, not salt tolerant. Prefers deep, organic, well-drained soil, acidic to slightly alkaline. Heavy feeder; fibrous, shallow roots – difficult for grass/plants to grow under it. Needs room to grow.

Size: 40-75' high x 40-50' wide

Shape: roundish with dense heavy crown

Bark: gray and smoother on young trees; roughly and deeply furrowed with darker tannish-gray bark with turned-up edges often revealing salmon-colored inner bark

Branching: opposite (remember MAD – Maple, Ash, Dogwood)

Leaves: medium-dark green top, paler beneath; single, opposite, palmately veined; 3-5" high and wide, 5 lobes with few coarse teeth and smooth margins

Flowers: greenish yellow in small groups curving downward on long delicate stems

Seeds: samaras; winged, about 1.5" long; mature Sept.-Oct.

Sap: clear (Norway maple's sap is milky) and highest in sugar content; best for maple syrup; takes 32 gallons of sap to boil down to 1 gallon of maple syrup

Wood: hard, strong, close grained, tough; satiny appearance

Wildlife value: trees browsed by deer, moose, snowshoe hare; squirrels feed on seeds, buds, twigs, leaves

Features: sap; wood; beautiful bark and balanced shape; great fall leaf colors of gold, orange, red depending upon availability of water and sunshine

Uses of wood: flooring, veneer, cabinetry, furniture, bowls, fuel wood of best quality, bowling pins, baseball bats (besides white ash), parts of musical instruments. **History:** Native Americans taught colonists to make maple syrup. Ashes were once used as source of potash for making soap.

