



PRINCETON
DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE
AND OPERATIONS
1 Monument Drive
Princeton, New Jersey 08540
609-497-7639
www.princetonnj.gov
Taylor Sapudar LTE #621

Tree of the Month- October 2021 Red Maple

Common Name: Red Maple

Botanical Name: *Acer rubrum*

Native Range: Newfoundland to Florida; East coast to Minnesota; hardy in zones 3-9

Height: 40' to 60' in height but can reach to 120' in the wild

Spread: 30' to 40'

Growth Rate: medium to fast; 10-12ft in 5 to 7 years.

Leaf Description: opposite, simple, 2 "to 5" in length; usually 5 lobed; medium to dark green on top but gray to silver underneath with hairy veins.

Fall Color: Fall color varies from greenish yellow to brilliant red with only selected varieties considered brilliant red in the. Southern part of the country. There are more than seventy cultivars of the red maple with variables denoting degrees of fall color.

Flower Timing: mid to late spring

Flower Description: flowers are red formed in dense clusters before leaves appear.

Fruit: the fruit is reddish initially maturing to brown or green with red tinges. The fruit is winged maturing in May to June.

Bark Description: soft gray or grayish brown.

Wildlife Benefit: Pollinators such as bees are attracted to the flower nectar. The seeds or samaras are eaten by small mammals.

Tolerates: very tolerant of soil variants but prefers slightly acid, moist conditions. Frequently one of the first trees to turn color in the fall

Possible Insects: leaf hoppers may cause damage.

Possible Disease: verticillium wilt

Uses: This tree is described as an excellent one for lawns, parks or streets although it does not tolerate heavily polluted environments. The red maple is considered one of the preferred maple species for its foliage, strong wood and brilliant fall color. Its fall color is described as 'dazzling' by Dirr. The red maple is further described as one of the most common and easily recognizable of all landscape trees.

Where to be found on municipal property: Alee of red maples along McComb Road in the Campbell Woods neighborhood. Red maples can also be spotted at the Mountain Lakes Preserve along the green trail which loops around Mountain Lake. Specific Red Maple sightings include the southwestern corner of the lake near the Princeton Ice Company storyboard signs, and also along the north eastern side past the white oak stone sculpture. Another location includes the parking lot area down by the Mountain Lakes House, marked in yellow tape.

Common Cultivars

- Armstrong- Known for columnar growth habit
- October Glory- Known for vibrant red fall color
- Red Sunset- Known for glossy dark green foliage, adaptability, and vibrant red fall color

Additional Facts

- The nation's largest Red Maple is in the Great Smokey Mountains National Park. This tree was declared champion in 1997 by American Forests and is listed in the National Register of Big Trees as being 141' tall and just over 7' in diameter at 4½' above ground.
- Commonly used for lumber
- Susceptible to girdling roots.

<https://www.arboday.org/trees/treeguide/treedetail.cfm?itemID=867>

Dirr, M. A.; Manual of Woody Landscape Plants. 2019

https://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/misc/ag_654/volume_2/acer/rubrum.htm

(<https://www.arboday.org/calculator/>)