



## Sugar Maple

*Acer saccharum*



**Native Range**  
Eastern North America

**Description**  
The sugar maple puts on a show in the fall with yellow, burnt orange, and red leaves. It produces groups of small, greenish-yellow flowers that curve downward on long, delicate stems and bloom in April and May. It yields pairs of winged seeds that mature in September and October.

**Pollination**  
The sugar maple can receive sufficient pollen for pollination through wind alone, although both insects, such as bees as well as wind are often factors in pollen distribution.

**Environmental Benefits**  
Squirrels feed on the seeds, buds, twigs, and leaves. Sugar maples are commonly browsed by white-tailed deer, moose, and snowshoe hare.

**Environmental Concerns**  
Sugar maple is generally intolerant of pollution. It does not like soil compaction or road salt.

**History**  
In 1663, chemist Richard Boyle informed Europeans about a tree in the New World that produced a sweet substance (maple sap). John Smith was among the first settlers to note Indigenous Peoples' sugar processing and the fact that they used it for barter. Indigenous Peoples also used the inner bark to make tea to treat coughs and diarrhea and taught the early colonists how to tap the trees to make maple syrup. Today, the making of maple syrup has become a multi-billion-dollar industry in the US and Canada. The sugar maple leaf is the national symbol of Canada.

**Size**  
At maturity, height of 60' to 75' and spread of 30' to 60'.

**Ease of Tree Care**  
It is generally easy to grow in average, medium moisture well-drained soil in full to partial sun. It prefers 4 hours of direct sunlight per day but does tolerate shade and has moderate drought tolerance. It is susceptible to diseases such as cankers, leaf spot, tar spot, and verticillium and is also susceptible to aphids, borers, and scale.

**Where to Plant**  
Perfect for lawns and parks with room to spread out. Its dense crown offers wonderful shade. Do not plant in confined areas or where salt is a problem.