

Norway Maple

Acer platanoides

Maple Family (Aceraceae)

Description: Norway maple, a deciduous tree, reaches a height of 40-50 feet, occasionally exceeding 90 feet. The leaves are dark green, simple, opposite, 4"-7" wide with 5 lobes. The mature tree has a rounded crown of dense foliage and the bark is grayish-black and furrowed. Norway maple is distinguished from other maples by the milky fluid that oozes from freshly broken leaf petioles (stems). The tree leafs out and produces seeds earlier than other maples. Its normal fall foliage is pale yellow; however, there is a popular cultivar known as "Crimson King" which has deep reddish purple fall foliage.

Origin: Norway maples are native to Europe, from Norway southward. Populations in the United States have either escaped from cultivation or originated from individual trees used as ornamental specimens.

Habitat: Norway maple is well adapted to various soil extremes, such as sand, clay or acid. It grows in hot and dry conditions, and it can tolerate ozone and sulfur dioxide air pollution. Norway maples are widely planted in the United States and can be found from the northern border with Canada south to the Carolinas (Hardiness Zones 3-7).

Why is it a problem? Individual trees produce large numbers of seeds that are wind dispersed and invade forests and forest edges. The dense canopy formed by Norway maple inhibits the regeneration of sugar maple and

other tree seedlings, reducing forest diversity. Also, since Norway maple has shallow roots, it competes with other plants in the landscape, including grasses, and can cause damage to pavement in urban settings.

Management: Norway maple can be controlled by hand removal of seedlings. Larger trees in the natural landscape can be girdled.

Alternatives:

Acer rubrum (Red Maple) has red fall color and is a good wildlife food source.

Acer saccharinum (Silver Maple) is a good wildlife food source, but may be too large for use as a street tree.

Acer saccharum (Sugar Maple) is a good wildlife food source, but is susceptible to road salt damage.

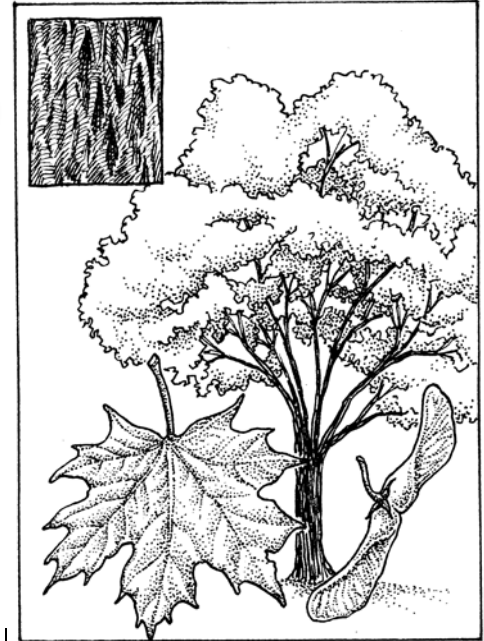


Illustration by E. Farnsworth

Quercus spp. (Oaks) are an excellent wildlife food source.

Tilia americana (Basswood) is a good shade tree.

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