

Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*)

Sugar maples are also known as Rock or Hard Maples. They are an excellent shade tree for residential lawns, parks, golf courses, etc., and are known for their outstanding fall color. Their dark green leaves in the summer change to brilliant shades of yellow, oranges, and reds in the fall. Sugar maples have an upright-oval to rounded growth habit and overall have a slow rate of growth, although when they are young, they may have more of a medium growth rate. Sugar maples can grow to a height of 60-70' or higher with their width about two-thirds of their height. They prefer well-drained, moderately moist fertile soils. They do not do well in tight compacted areas or restricted growing areas such as small tree lawns or planters.

Sugar maples are outstanding native trees. Sugar maples, especially in the New England area, are tapped for their sap in February and March, which is eventually made into maple syrup.

There are many different cultivars of sugar maples available in the trade. Cultivars of trees often have better characteristics than the straight species. In the case of sugar maples, ask your nursery or landscaper for a 'Commemoration' sugar maple (*Acer saccharum* 'Commemoration'), if possible. It is a more vigorous, faster growing cultivar than the species. The mature size of the 'Commemoration' sugar maple is 50' by 35'. They heavily textured dark green leaves and have a deep yellow-orange-red fall color usually starting earlier than the straight species.

