

Maple trees for Parker County

(Excerpts from *Aggie Horticulture*, *Benny Simpson's Texas Native Trees* and *the real dirt A Gardening Handbook for Parker County*.)



Beautiful color for fall is available in maple trees that can be grown in Texas.

Shantung Maple

Acer truncatum

(Texas Superstar)

Reminiscent of Japanese maple but with much greater toughness. This beautiful maple has spreading canopy with attractive foliage that turns spectacular red, red-orange in late fall. Tolerates heat and alkaline soils. Makes wonderful shade tree for smaller yards.

Hardiness: Zone 6

Exposure: Full sun to part shade.

Size: Height 25 feet tall, 20 feet wide

Care: Not adapted to far west Texas. Wrap trunk first three years to prevent sunscald.



The following are featured in Benny Simpson's Texas Native Trees

Box Elder, Box Elder Maple, Ashleaf Maple, Red River Maple

Acer negundo

Aceraceae

Box elder differs from all other maple species in having compound leaves with three, five, seven or sometimes nine leaflets. The young trees and twigs on older trees are a bright olive-green. Box elders are widely distributed from the Eastern seaboard onto the Great Plains. In Texas the tree occurs from the eastern borders of the state to west of Dallas-Fort Worth and San Antonio in floodplain swamps and along waterways. Box elder is intolerant of drought and should not be planted in the southern Great Plains. It is also susceptible to heart rot and many insects, especially box-elder bugs.

Plant Habit or Use: medium tree

Exposure: sun partial sun

Flower Color: greenish, inconspicuous

Blooming Period: spring

Fruit Characteristics: two-winged samaras

Height: to 45 ft.

Width: to 40 ft.

Plant Character: deciduous

Heat Tolerance: high

Water Requirements: medium low

Soil Requirements: adaptable

Bigtooth Maple, Sabinal Maple, Western Sugar Maple, Uvalde Bigtooth Maple, Canyon Maple, Southwestern Bigtooth Maple

Acer grandidentatum

Aceraceae

Bigtooth maple is one of the most attractive and interesting Texas trees. Native to the sheltered canyons of the Edwards Plateau (these are the maples of Lost Maples State Park), the Lampasas Cut Plains and the high country of the Trans-Pecos, it is a small tree up to 50 feet tall. It grows in limestone and igneous soils and is relatively drought tolerant. Mature trees have beautiful red and yellow fall color. The trees in the Edwards Plateau are found in two confusing forms: *A. grandidentatum* var. *grandidentatum* (bigtooth maple), which has three- to five-lobed, toothed leaves, and var. *sinuosum* (Uvalde bigtooth maple), whose toothless leaves are three-lobed. However, both types of leaves can sometimes be found on the same tree.

Plant Habit or Use: small tree medium tree

Exposure: sun partial sun

Flower Color: yellow

Blooming Period: spring

Fruit Characteristics: 2-winged samara, green or slightly reddish with a brown wing

Height: to 50 ft.

Width: to 40 ft.

Plant Character: deciduous

Heat Tolerance: high

Water Requirements: medium low

Soil Requirements: alkaline adaptable

Chalk Maple, Whitebark Maple

Acer leucoderme

Aceraceae

This is the loveliest as well as the most rare of Texas's maples. It is the dominant maple in the Sabine National Forest and is the most numerous of the sugar maple complex in that area. Chalk maple averages only 12 to 15 feet high, although it can reach 20 feet tall. It is almost always multitrunked with characteristic whitish to light gray bark, although it is not as pronounced in Texas as it is farther east. It has pendent, drooping leaves, much like those of *Acer nigrum* (black maple), which occurs in the northern U.S. Chalk maple is very similar to Southern sugar maple; one difference is that the leaves of Southern sugar maple are green on both sides while those of chalk maple underneath are a glaucous (gray-green) green because of the velvety hairs.

Plant Habit or Use: small tree

Exposure: partial sun

Flower Color: yellow

Blooming Period: spring

Fruit Characteristics: reddish-brown samara

Height: to 20 ft.

Width: to 15 ft.

Plant Character: deciduous

Heat Tolerance: medium

Water Requirements: medium low

Soil Requirements: acid neutral

Other maple trees that can be grown in Texas:

Fall Foliage of Red Japanese Maple Trees

Japanese red maple trees (*Acer palmatum* 'Atropurpureum' spp.) display red-colored leaves all summer that get brighter in fall, making them spectacular fall foliage specimen trees. Grown in zones 5-8, red Japanese maples reach a height of 30' with a spread of 20'. Plant in full to partial sun and well-drained soil. In zones 7-8 these fall foliage trees can profit from the respite from the heat that they'll get if planted in an area with partial sunlight. Many colorful cultivars available.

Fall Foliage of Japanese Bloodgood Maple Trees

The "Bloodgood" Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum* 'Bloodgood') is one of the most popular Japanese maple tree cultivars. This fall foliage standout attains a maximum size of about 20' x 20'. It profits from light to partial shade. Its leaves in summer are a reddish-purple and in fall the leaves become a striking crimson.

Fall Foliage of Japanese Crimson Queen Maple Trees

"Crimson Queen" Japanese maple trees (*Acer palmatum dissectum* 'Crimson Queen') can reach a height of 8'-10' and spread of 10'-12'. This dwarf will has a pleasing weeping habit and dissected leaf type. The dark red summer leaves mature to a crimson color for fall.

Fall Foliage of Japanese Cutleaf Green Maple Trees

Cutleaf green Japanese maple trees (*Acer palmatum dissectum* 'Filigree') are compact, reaching 4'-6' in height, with a spread of 6'-9'. They have bear dissected leaves that are green in summer, turning golden in fall.