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Leaves, Limbs, Needles and Boughs

by Fred D. Opperman

This month's selection is one of the most common trees we are to find in our landscape. Acer platanoides (a'ser plat-anoy'dez) the Norway Maple. This tree has been over used and over planted to some extent. Grass is difficult to grow under a mature Norway due to the heavy shade and extensive shallow root system.

Leaves: Opposite, simple, 4-7" across, 5 lobed, lobes sharp pointed, remotely dentate, dark green above, lustrous beneath often with hairs in axils of veins; milky sap is visible when petiole is removed from the stem.



Bud: Terminal imbricate, 1/4 to 3/8" long, rounded, scales plump, fleshy, lustrous, greenish maroon to maroon, essentially glabrous except for pubescence at edge of scales, to 8 scaled, two accessory buds 1/3 to 1/2 size.



Stem: Stout, smooth, glabrous olive brown, lenticelled, leaf scars meet to form a sharp angle; pith solid, white; 2nd year stems lose luster, become more gray-brown.

Size: 40 to 50' in height, occasionally over 90', usually spread is 2/3's or equal to height.

Leaf Color: Dark green in summer; sometimes changing to handsome yellow in fall; leaves hold late and color toward the end of October and into November; when fall color is maximally expressed.

Culture: Easy to transplant, well adapted to extremes in soils, will withstand sand, clay, acid to calcareous soils, seems to withstand hot, dry conditions better than Sugar Maples; tolerates polluted atmosphere; intolerant of 2-4-D.

Cultivars: There are many cultivars but most nurseries grow only a few. To list a few: Almira, Cleveland, Columnare', Crimson King, Crimson Sentry, Deborah, Emerald Queen, and Faasen's Black.

Credit: Manual of Woody Landscape Plants by Michael Dirr