Tree of the Month

November’s tree of the month is the Red Maple. It is a beautiful fall tree and certainly adds to the beauty of your yard and our town. Readily available, this tree is affordable and will certainly add to the value of your home and yard. So, as you are looking around at your yard, consider planting a Red Maple.

Native Red Maple Tree

The native red maple tree is a deciduous tree that will often grow to between forty and sixty feet tall. The crown of a red maple tree is rounded to oval in shape. Red maple derives its name from its brilliant autumnal foliage.

The leaves of a red maple tree are shiny green on top and pale green beneath. They typically have three to five lobes, and are three to six inches across. The flowers are small and red, appearing in dense clusters from late March to early April. The flowers are followed by small red fruit appearing in early summer. Red maple trees also have reddish stems and twigs.

In the fall, the foliage of red maple trees turns a spectacular crimson orange, which remains on the tree for a long time.

Red maple trees are fast growing maple trees, which prefer full sun, but will also grow in partial

sun. They are widely adaptable in the soils in which they grow. Red maple trees are highly ornamental, especially during the flowering period and in the fall months.

The fruit, a samara, is an important wildlife food as it develops in the spring when other foods typically are not yet available.

Plant these trees in spring or fall. Red maples tolerate a wide range of soils, except those with a very high pH.

Prune dead and/or damaged wood any time of year.

One of the first signs of spring is the flowers of the Red Maple. The profusion of tiny, red flowers against its smooth gray bark is a beautiful sight. Red Maple is also one of the first trees to change color in the fall.

Maples are planted as ornamental trees by homeowners, businesses and municipalities.
Invasive TREE: Please Do NOT PLANT!

Tree of Heaven

This tree was first brought from China to Europe in the 1740s and to the United States in 1784. It was one of the first trees brought west during a time when chinoiserie was dominating European arts, and was initially hailed as a beautiful garden specimen. However, enthusiasm soon waned after gardeners became familiar with its suckering habits and its foul smelling odor. Despite this, it was used extensively as a street tree during much of the 19th century. Outside of Europe and the United States, the plant has been spread to many other areas beyond its native range. In a number of these, it has become an invasive species due to its ability to quickly colonise disturbed areas and suppress competition with allelopathic chemicals. It is considered a noxious weed in Australia, the United States, New Zealand and several countries in southern and eastern Europe. The tree also re-sprouts vigorously when cut, making its eradication difficult and time consuming. In many urban areas, it has acquired the derisive nicknames of "ghetto palm" and "stink tree".
The Tree of Heaven, which actually produces lovely yellow and orange flower clusters in July and August has actually been a hellish addition to the American landscape, since getting rid of the tree is difficult (cutting it down creates more root suckers and stump sprouts).

It competes fiercely with native trees for habitat, and, to make matters worse, it is useless for structural wood and not even good for firewood or wildlife.

The Tree-of-Heaven, also known as ailanthus, Chinese sumac, and stinking shumac, is widely distributed across the United States, and today grows in forty-two states, from Maine to Florida and west to California.

This tree commonly grows in disturbed urban areas where it sprouts up just about anywhere – alleys, sidewalks, parking lots and streets.

*(A bit of trivia: The book “A Tree Grows in Brooklyn”, by Betty Smith is based on the ailanthus tree.)*

In rural areas the Tree of Heaven grows in fields, along roadsides, woodland edges and forest openings.

**What The Tree of Heaven Looks Like**

The Tree of Heaven’s wood is soft, weak, course-grained and creamy white to light brown. Mature trees can reach heights of 80 feet or more. Seeds are produced on female trees in late summer/early fall in flat, twisted papery “samaras.”

It produces a lot of seeds, grows quickly and can overwhelm native species. Once it takes hold in an area, it can

![Image](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

form an impenetrable thicket.

The tree also emits toxins that prevent other plant life from growing around it. The root systems cause damage to sewers and foundations. It has also become a pest to farmers since it often pops up in recently planted fields.

**How to Manage the Tree of Heaven**

New suckers ought to be cut or pulled as soon as possible since they are able to build root reserves. Cutting alone does not do much good since it quickly produces root suckers and stump sprouts.
A cover of native trees or grass sod will help shade out and discourage ailanthus seedlings from sprouting.