Hedge Maple Tree

Acer Campestre

Wire Friendly

HEDGE MAPLE

©Bruce Marlin

Acer campestre - Hedge Maple (*Aceraceae*)

Acer campestre is a slow-growing, medium-sized shade tree for lawn or street. It can also be a large shrub used in hedges. Hedge Maple is rounded, dense of foliage, low-branching, and adaptable to alkaline and compacted soils.

FEATURES

Form

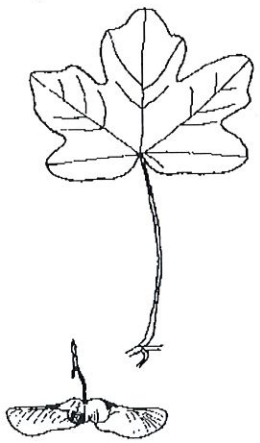
-small- to medium-sized shade tree, or large shrub
-also found as a limbed up, small- to medium-sized tree for the residential landscape
-slowly maturing to 30' tall x 30' wide under optimum conditions, but often half that size in urban situations, or even less if sheared into hedge form
-upright oval growth habit in youth, quickly becoming rounded and spreading with age
-slow growth rate

Culture

-full sun to partial sun
-prefers moist, well-drained soils in full sun, but tolerates urban conditions (dry soils, compacted soils, alkaline soils, heat, and drought) much better than most Maples
-few disease or pest problems
-limited availability in either single-trunked or multi-trunked tree form, and in shrub form

Foliage

-opposite arrangement, dark green, and densely arranged along the twigs, about 3" long and wide, with palmate venation, and exuding a milky sap when the petiole is cut



-the leaf blade is 5-lobed; the basal 2 lobes much smaller than the upper 3, and each of the upper lobes incised and usually rounded, but not serrated
-autumn color is yellow to yellowish-green; not striking

Flowers

-green inflorescences in early May are noticeable but ornamentally insignificant

Fruits

-2 small joined green samaras per stalk, having widely divergent and prominent wings, in pendulous clusters from the stems and maturing as brown fruits in Oct.

Twigs

-brown stems with gray buds
-some selections have prominent corky or "winged" twigs

Trunk

-light brown to gray branches may have a slight degree of striation on some specimens
-trunks becoming light gray and fissured at maturity

USAGE

Function

-small tree or large shrub, planted for shade, specimen, hedge, or street tree use

Texture

-medium texture in foliage and when bare
-thick density in foliage and when bare

Assets

-urban tolerant
-low mature height for a shade tree (good for under power lines)
-dense summer shade
-of the many Maples: one that is particularly adaptable (tolerant of acidic, neutral, or alkaline soil pH)

Liabilities

-shallow root system can surface with age
-usually has poor autumn color
-slow growth rate

Habitat

-Zones 4 to 8
-Native to Europe, Near East, and Africa

SELECTIONS

Alternates

-good small- to medium-sized street trees (*Crataegus* x *lavallei*, *Koelreuteria paniculata*, *Malus* 'Red Baron', *Tilia cordata* 'Greenspire', etc.)

Cultivars / Variants / Related Species

-*Acer campestre* Queen Elizabeth™ (also known as 'Evelyn') - a more vigorous form, having more angled branching (45 degree branch angles, upright) resulting in a more vase-like habit, and darker, larger foliage