

Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)

The Red Maple has many claims to fame, including the greatest north-south range of any tree species living entirely in the eastern forests (Newfoundland to southern Florida). It is also the state tree of Rhode Island.

The Red Maple can grow typically to 60 feet in height with a spread slightly less than that. It has very small red flowers that appear before the leaves do. These flowers serve as the first food source in the spring for many species of bees. The nation's largest Red Maple lies far to the south of Rhode Island in Great Smokey Mountains National Park. This tree was declared champion in 1997 by American Forests and is listed in the National Register of Big Trees as being 141 feet tall and just over 7 feet in diameter at 4½ feet above ground.

The Red Maple is best known for its brilliant red fall color. In fact many cultivars have been bred to focus in on this attribute, such as: Autumn Blaze, Ablaze, Autumn Flame, Autumn Glory, October glory, and Red Sunset.

Red Maples do pretty well as a street tree in certain circumstances as they tolerate restrictive spaces and have roots that grow downward.