

Star magnolia (*Magnolia stellata*)

The Star Magnolia is a deciduous flowering tree that normally reaches a height of 15 to 20 feet at maturity, with a slightly smaller spread. The star shape of its white flowers gives it both its common name and scientific name. It blooms in March or April, making it one of the true harbingers of spring. Fuzzy, pussy-willow-like buds precede the spring display of mildly fragrant flowers.

The Star Magnolia has a rounded habit and can be grown into a tree form with pruning. Otherwise, it is likely to grow as a shrub, which can be shaped into an oval or a round form. Some varieties are particularly suited to growing as shrubs. It is best grown in full sun, in moist, organically rich, acidic to neutral, well-drained loams, although it will tolerate clay soil. It tolerates partial shade but flowers best in full sun. It appreciates consistent and even moisture in summer, and is intolerant of soil extremes (dry or wet), most urban pollutants, and high winds. It works well as a single specimen tree, planted in borders, small groupings, or as an accent plant.