

# Big Leaf Maple v Norway Maple v Sycamore Maple

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## *Big Leaf Maple (Acer macrophyllum)*



**Bigleaf Maple** is the largest of the maples in the genus *Acer*, with the ability to reach heights over 100ft. It is native to the Pacific Northwest. Indigenous Americans use Bigleaf Maple wood for dishes, pipes, hooks, and paddles. The tree is also known as the paddle tree. The inner bark was used to make baskets, rope, and whisks.



## Identification

### Leaves

- Leaves are very large, measuring 6-12 inches across and are deeply lobed, with 5 lobes. Good ID characteristic.
- Leaves only have a few wavy teeth.
- Leaves are shiny dark green on top and paler underneath and turn yellow with sometimes a ting of orange in the fall.
- Leaf stem is nearly as long as the leaf.
- Only maple native to the U.S. that can ooze a milky substance from leaf stem. Norway Maples, not native to the U.S., also can.

### Flowers

- Flowers are greenish yellow and about 1/8 an inch across.
- Flowers appear in spring and hang in clusters at the ends of twigs.
- Flowers are sweet and can be used in salads.
- Flowers usually emerge before leaves appear.



### Fruit

- Fruit, known as samara, consists of a two-winged seed joined at the base.
- The seeds have hairy "heads" and about 1 to 2 inches long.
- The seeds are eaten by squirrels, grosbeaks, and mice. Deer and elk eat the twigs.

### Bark

The bark is reddish brown and deeply furrowed in mature.



# Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*)



**Norway Maple** is native to Europe and Western Asia. A shade tolerant tree commonly used as a landscape plant, it has subsequently become invasive in North America, including in the mid-Atlantic, mid-West, and Pacific Northwest. The tree is 40 to 80ft tall at maturity. It can be confused with a Sugar Maple, which has a similar leaf shape.



## Identification

### Leaves

- Leaves are palmately lobed and bright green.
- Leaves have few side veins and veins are lighter than the rest of the leaf.
- The tips of each lobe are pointed and the leaf margins are not serrated between points.
- The leaf's surface looks smooth and often waxy.
- The leaves are 4-7 inches, much smaller than the Bigleaf Maple.
- There are many common cultivars of Norway Maple with red and purple leaves.

### Fruit

- The seed clusters hang at similar heights and are oriented horizontally.
- They are green and turn pale beige when ripe.
- They are not hairy like the big leaf maple.



### Flowers

- The flowers are in upright clusters that are round.
- The flowers are yellow with a green tinge.
- The flowers are ¼ inch, twice the size of the Bigleaf maple.



### Bark

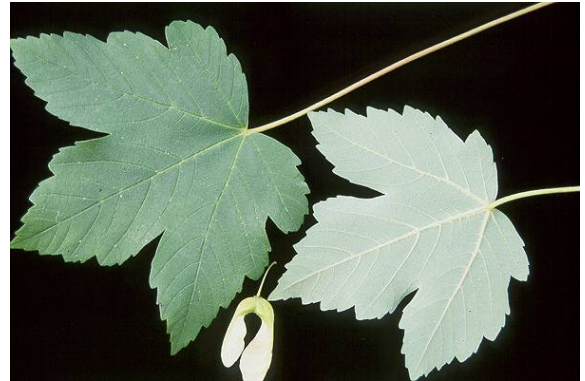
The bark is grayish brown with deep furrows when mature and vertically orientated.



# Sycamore Maple (*Acer pseudoplatanus*)



**Sycamore Maple** is a large maple that is normally 40 to 60ft tall, but capable of reaching 100ft. The spreading branches form an oval or round canopy. It is native to Central Europe and Western Asia.



## Identification

### Leaves

- Leaves have shallow indentations between the lobes.
- Leaves can have a leathery appearance, with strong venation.
- Leaves are dark green on top and greenish-white on the bottom.

### Flowers

- The flowers dangle in long 4 centimeter clusters much longer than wide.
- Leaves on the tree are fully formed by the time the tree blooms.
- The flowers are pale yellow.

### Fruit

- The tree produces dangling clusters of seeds that extend quite far vertically.
- They are oriented at a 45-degree angle narrower than other maples and are often tinged red.
- The seeds are not hairy (as are the Bigleaf Maples).

### Bark

- Bark on a young Sycamore Maple tree is horizontally oriented and has no signs of vertical ridges.
- Mature bark is flaky and gray with patches of reddish brown or orange where the bark has peeled away.
- Bark is similar to a sycamore. Thus, the common name.

