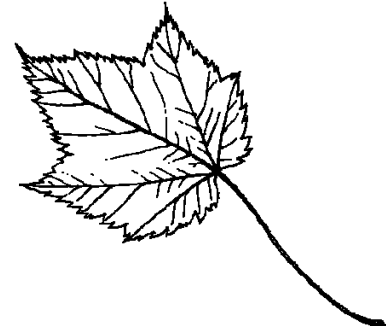


Maine Tree Species Fact Sheet

Common Name: Mountain Maple (Moose Maple, Low Maple, and Water Maple)

Botanical Name: *Acer spicatum*



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Tree Type: Deciduous

Physical Description:

Growth Habit: Mountain maple is a slow to medium growing tall shrub or small bushy tree. It is found in cool woods where the climate is humid and precipitation is year-round. It has medium moisture and nutrient requirements, and low heat and light requirements. Mountain maple prefers rich, moist soils on rocky slopes and flats, along streams. It also grows well on drier or well-drained acid soils. Mountain maple is tolerant of deep shade, but also grows well in sun. The tree at times forms dense thickets due to its habit of growing in clumps.

The bark is thin, reddish brown to gray in color, smooth, and eventually becoming slightly furrowed or warty. The leaves are opposite, 3-lobed or sometimes slightly 5-lobed. They are 2-5 inches long and wide, dark yellowish green, smooth and shiny above, paler beneath and covered with a short grayish down. They have rather coarse teeth and prominently sunken veins on the upper surface. The twigs are hairy, green, red, or reddish brown, not striped, and the pith is brown. The buds are usually less than ¼ inch long, hairy, valve-like, green and only slightly stalked, slender and pointed

Height: The mountain maple seldom grows over 30 feet in height with a trunk diameter of 3-4 inches. It grows approximately one foot per year, with maximum growth occurring when plants are 5-10 years of age.

Shape: Tall shrub or small, short-trunked tree of bushy appearance.

Fruit/Seed Description/Dispersal Methods:

The flowers appear in June in long, hairy, yellow-green clusters after the leaves are full-grown. The fruit is paired, with wings slightly divergent, and occurs in ascending clusters. It has a wrinkled depression on the seed body and ripens in early fall. Mountain maple reproduces by seed, which is wind disseminated. Unlike most maples, mountain maple is insect pollinated.

Range within Maine:

Mountain maple occurs throughout Maine and is especially common in the northern part of the state. This species is hardy to Zone 2.

Distinguishing Features:

Short trunked tree of bushy appearance and leaves.

Interesting Facts:

Mountain maple wood is close-grained, moderately light, soft and not very strong. It has no economic importance.

Relationship to Wildlife:

Moose, white-tailed deer, cottontails, snowshoe hares, and woodland caribou browse mountain maple. Moose, deer and beavers consume the bark. Ruffed grouse consume the vegetative buds.

Landscape Use:

Mountain maple has limited landscape value.

Common Problems of Pests of the Tree in Maine:

Mountain maple has no serious pests or diseases.

References:

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Manual of Woody Landscape Plants, 5th Edition. Dirr, Michael A. Publishing L.L.C. 1998.

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