

Southern Sugar Maple

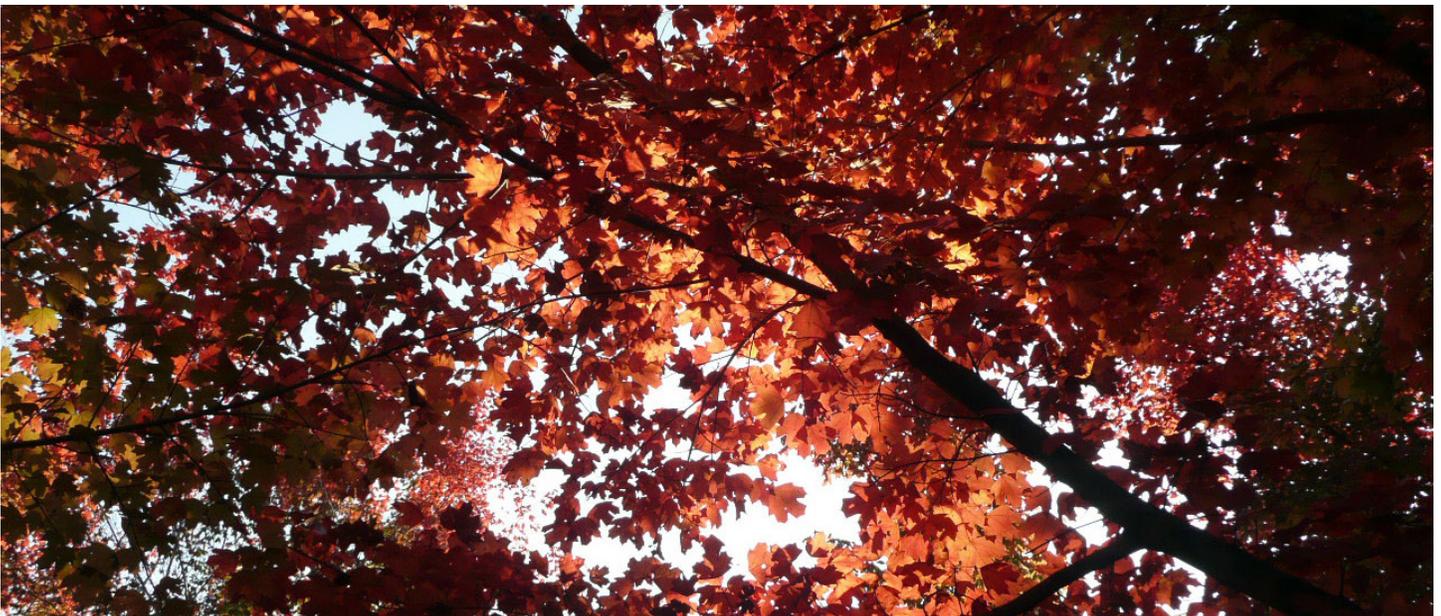
Jeb S. Fields, Ph.D., Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist, LSU AgCenter, Hammond Research Station
Anna Timmerman, Assistant Horticulture Agent, LSU AgCenter

Acer saccharum var. floridanum

- **Recommended Use:** Ornamental, wildlife habitat, fall color
- **Exposure:** Full sun to partial shade
- **Size:** Height: 30-40 feet; Width: 20-25 feet
- **Habit:** Upright
- **Growth:** Moderate, moderate lifespan
- **Maintenance Category:** Low maintenance
- **Water Use:** Average to low
- **Highlights:** Deciduous tree with beautiful fall color; native shade tree.

Summary

The southern sugar maple is a native deciduous shade tree that is underutilized in Louisiana. A naturally occurring variety of the sugar maple, it has adapted to live in the hot and wet climates of Louisiana, doing particularly well in southern Louisiana. It has a moderate to fast growth habit and will reach heights of up to 40 feet in as little as 20 years. It has few reported pest or disease issues and is considered to be a low-maintenance tree. Its small leaves and low height make it an ideal tree for hurricane zones. The southern sugar maple is one of the few reliable fall color species, even in south Louisiana. The leaves seem to “fire up” as they change from yellow to orange to scarlet in the fall. The southern sugar maple is a food source for several wildlife species, including the rosy maple moth. Southern sugar maples provide habitat for many nesting bird species and are a preferred tree for insect foraging by birds.



Southern sugar maple is one of the top choices for fall color in Louisiana.

Requirements

- Choose healthy nursery-grown stock. Correct any circling roots before planting.
- Southern sugar maples do best in full sun but can handle part shade.
- Fall and winter are the best time to plant. This allows for roots to begin establishment before the spring growth period.
- The southern sugar maple is well adapted to many soil conditions. No supplemental fertilizer should be needed.

Growth Habit

- Southern sugar maples will reach mature heights of up to 40 feet in as little as 20 years.
- Will reach 25-foot widths, so space them no less than 15 feet apart.

Care and Maintenance

- Moderate growth rate.
- Ensure proper soil moisture while the tree becomes established (at least six months).
- Little to no pruning should be required for this tree. Light shaping and pruning the tree's lower branches can help to guide the final form of the tree.
- Southern sugar maple has been shown to be susceptible to aphids, borers and scale, but generally no treatment is needed. They occasionally have issues with verticillium wilt, anthracnose, cankers, leaf spot and tar spot. Leaf scorch may be a problem in drought conditions.



Palmate leaves provide a brilliant color change for fall landscapes. Winged seed capsules form and are carried by the wind in helicopter motion.

For more information on southern sugar maple and other Louisiana Super Plants, contact your local LSU AgCenter extension office or visit www.LSUAgCenter.com/SuperPlants.



William B. Richardson, LSU Vice President for Agriculture
Louisiana State University Agricultural Center
Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station
Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service
LSU College of Agriculture

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