



METRO MAPLES

July 2020 Newsletter



Summer
SALE

SUMMER SALE

Sale prices on our 1, 2 and 3 gallon trees begin on August 1st.



'TRIDENT MAPLE'

A hardy, vigorous large tree for full sun.



PROPAGATION

How do we grow these things and why do we do it that way?

SUMMER SALE!

Many of our customers are collectors of our young container-grown Japanese maples and Ginkgos.

We have a huge selection of thousands of trees and over 130 different cultivars, each with their own unique colors, shapes, and sizes.

Beginning on this Saturday, August 1st, we'll be offering a 20% discount on all of our 1, 2 and 3-gallon trees that normally sell for \$25, \$35 and \$45 respectively. The sale will run through Saturday, August 29th.

We are open Monday through Saturday from 8am-2pm, and ask that you schedule an appointment so that we can be available to greet you and provide you a safe and enjoyable time at the nursery. We'll be wearing our masks and keeping a safe distance, and ask that you do the same. If you'd like to make an appointment, please send us an email at metromaples@yahoo.com.

We'd love to see you!



Summer
SALE



Fall colors on Trident maple vary from tree to tree and year to year, but are always bright and colorful.

TRIDENT MAPLE

The Trident maple, *Acer buergerianum*, is a fast-growing, tall tree that can grow in full Texas sun. Tridents are hardy trees, growing to nearly 40 feet tall by 20 feet wide.

Tridents are native to China, Korea, and Japan, and are adaptable to a variety of conditions.

The name 'trident' comes from the three-toothed leaves, which are green in spring and summer, turning a mix of golds, oranges and reds in autumn.

The bark is gray, but peels over time, revealing orange-brown bark underneath. The extent to which this happens can vary a bit from tree to tree, and often becomes more pronounced over time.

Tridents prefer well-drained, mildly acidic soil, so amending heavy clay soils with some composted pine bark or landscaper's mix is definitely advisable.

It is quite adaptable, however, and is a strong grower that handles our Texas heat and sun with ease.

Compared to Japanese maples, there aren't nearly as many varieties of Trident maple in cultivation. We do carry a couple of dwarf cultivars.



A mature Trident maple in the landscape.
Photo credit: Keifer Nursery

'Miyasama yatsubusa' is a dwarf cultivar that stays quite small and maxes out at about 5-6' tall. 'Mino yatsubusa' is a shrubby dwarf that stays really rounded and full at about 3-4' in diameter. Both dwarf varieties will prefer full to part sun.

We currently have Trident maples available in 2-gallon containers for \$35, and will have larger 7 and 15-gallon containers available this fall. Dwarf cultivars are currently available in 5-gallon containers for \$75.

PROPAGATION

We've gotten several questions lately about how we grow our trees and how there can be so much variety within the Japanese maple species.

While you can plant the seeds from a Japanese maple and get a very nice tree, you may not get the tree you were hoping for.

For example, if you plant the seeds from the red-leaved weeping variety 'Crimson Queen,' chances are the seedling will have green summer foliage and will grow to be around 12-15' tall.



This little guy is a sprouted seedling. Seedlings can be red or green, and can be a mix of yellows golds and reds in autumn.

It will be a lovely tree, and quite healthy and vigorous. Seedlings tend to grow more quickly and can often be more sun and heat-tolerant. They will be a mix of golds and reds in the fall and can be exceptionally graceful and elegant trees -- they just won't be a cascading red-leaved dissected-leafed tree like 'Crimson Queen'.

Why is this?

Seeds are created in a tree when the flowers are pollinated. We don't have control over which flowers are pollinated by whom, so each seed is genetically different. A specific cultivar like 'Crimson Queen' or 'Bloodgood' is a singular individual. They are all members of the same species (*Acer palmatum*), but are as genetically unique as you or I (unless you're an identical twin).

So how did we get all these different cultivars?

Occasionally, a seed will sprout that has unusual branching or foliage or colors. Also, sometimes a branch on a mature tree will spontaneously mutate, and we can graft from that altered branch. Those rare chance mutations are what comprise the bulk of our inventory.

What is grafting?

Essentially, it's splicing together two trees. If the trees are from the same species (in our case *Acer palmatum*), we can attach a small piece of the tree we want to reproduce to the trunk of a seedling (called a rootstock), and that trunk and root system will feed the grafted branch.



Unique foliage like this is only available in large quantity because of propagation efforts like grafting.

Is this something I can do?

Yes, but there's an art to it. It's not very complicated, but that doesn't mean it's easy.

What is the process?



This person is cutting a scion that will be grafted onto an existing rootstock. The need for a good moisturizer is unfortunately all too common in the nursery trade, especially during grafting season (winter).

You'll start by getting a rootstock -- a sprouted Japanese maple seedling with a small trunk around 1/8" diameter. This is the tree whose base and root system you'll be grafting onto.

You'll also need a razor-sharp knife, grafting sealer, and grafting tape. You can find these online pretty easily.

You'll take a cutting from the end of a branch on the tree you're propagating. That

cutting should be several inches long and have around 3 nodes (the buds where the leaves originate).

Using your super sharp knife, you'll cut the base of that cutting into a wedge shape. Then, you'll slice into the side of the rootstock, creating a vertical flap that matches as closely as possible the contours of the wedge you created on the donor wood.

Insert the wedge into the flap, wrap the union in tape to hold it closed, and then use the liquid grafting seal to create an airtight seal around that tape.

That's it. With luck, when the tree wakes up in spring that rootstock will feed the grafted wood along with the rest of that seedling.

Once you see that the graft has 'taken' and is now actively growing, you can remove the remainder of the rootstock wood that is growing above the graft, and pinch any leaves budding out below the graft. This directs all the water and nutrition from the rootstock to the grafted branch, which is identical to the tree you're hoping to propagate because it IS that tree.

Of course, it'd be a lot easier to just come out to Metro Maples and pick up some of our 1, 2, or 3-gallon grafted trees. Did we mention they'll be on sale this Saturday?



This is a maple seedling with the seed and samara still attached.



METRO MAPLES

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