



# METRO MAPLES

*January 2019 Newsletter*



## **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

2019 promises to be an exciting year at Metro Maples!

## **'SKEETER'S BROOM'**

Our featured variety this month is a small, dense, upright red.

## **FOUNDATIONS**

We address a common concern: How close to my house can I plant this tree?

## **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

2018 was a record-setting year at Metro Maples, and we are so grateful to all of you for your continued business and for referring so many of your friends to our farm.

We made some changes "behind the scenes" last year that will help us grow more trees faster, which has already started to yield some great results.

We also reworked many of our sales areas and added a new staff member to our team to better serve you on your next trip to the farm!

In 2019 you can expect an even greater selection of beautiful, healthy Japanese maples at the best prices around and a continued commitment from us to make your experience at Metro Maples as beautiful, enjoyable, and relaxing as possible. We look forward to seeing you soon!





Skeeter's Broom in the landscape  
Photo by [www.gardenerdirect.com](http://www.gardenerdirect.com)

## 'SKEETER'S BROOM'

*Acer palmatum* 'Skeeter's Broom' is an upright-growing, dense, red-leaved tree that matures at 8-10' tall and slightly less wide.

As a general rule, the shorter an upright Japanese maple is at maturity, the denser its foliage will be, and 'Skeeter's Broom' is no exception. This variety is dense, twiggy, and more like a large bush than a small tree. The leaves are smaller than average, but there are a lot of them.

With a mature height in the 8-10' range, this tree will make an excellent focal point in a smaller garden and can provide excellent screening 3 seasons of the year.

The leaves emerge a bright red in spring, turning purplish bronze to green in summer, followed by a terrific bright red in the fall. The density of the foliage makes that color even more impactful. The effect is of a nearly solid mass of color.

This variety was discovered by Ed "Skeeter" Rod in Pennsylvania as a witches' broom on a 'Bloodgood'. A witches' broom is a mutation that occurs spontaneously on a single branch, causing a mass of short twigs with shorter internodes and smaller leaves than the parent tree. In this case, Skeeter removed the mutated branch and propagated it, creating this dwarf cultivar.



Skeeter's Broom foliage  
Photo by [www.sunnysidenursery.net](http://www.sunnysidenursery.net)

In our experience, 'Skeeter's Broom' has been a great performer in the Texas heat and can tolerate a few of hours of sun, preferably in the morning hours. More sunlight typically means darker red and purple colors in the summer, but too much sun can burn the leaves, so it's best to aim for 2-3 hours of early sun or dappled light all day. Deep shade all day will likely lead to bronze or green leaves in summer, but the spring and fall colors will always be a brilliant red.

We currently have trees in 1, 2, 10, and 45 gallon sizes available for purchase.

# FOUNDATIONS

One of the most common questions we're asked is, "How far away from my house should I plant this thing?"

North Texas soils are notorious for shifting with changes in rainfall, and planting thirsty trees with deep root systems close to foundations can sometimes make matters worse.

Fortunately, this is not a problem with Japanese maples, because they have very shallow, fibrous root systems that rarely go much deeper than 12-18". This is especially true of the weeping and dwarf varieties.



Dwarf Japanese maples in a foundation planting

Larger native trees like Oaks and Pecans have much deeper root systems, including a taproot which goes deep into the soil in search of a reliable source of water. While this makes those other species more drought tolerant than Japanese maples, it also makes them a riskier proposition when planting near foundations.

Shantung maples, including our own 'Fire Dragon' Shantung are much larger trees (around 30' tall and wide), which means they will have a more substantial root system than their Japanese cousins. Even so, they are still more shallow-rooted than the oaks, elms, and ashes. For Shantungs, a distance of at least 3-5 feet and preferably closer to 10 feet from your foundation would be our recommendation. Keep in mind, a distance this short will also mean the branches of the mature tree will be above your roof, and so will require some maintenance and pruning to make sure the branches don't come in contact with your shingles.

The shallow roots of our maples will make excellent additions to your foundation plantings and can provide much needed color and structure to your gardens, without risking any damage to your foundation or hardscape.



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