PLANT FACT SHEET

Acer rubrum L.

GENUS *Acer* **FAMILY** Sapindaceae

COMMON NAMES Red maple

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Sap, Seeds, Leaves, Bark

The sap of the tree is used as a source of sugar.
The inner bark can be cooked, dried, ground into flour then used to thicken soups.
The leaves of self sown seedlings can be eaten fresh.
The seeds with the wings removed can be boiled and eaten. The sprouted seeds are eaten raw.

DESCRIPTION

A deciduous tree. It grows 30 m high and spreads 5 m across. The trunk is 60 cm across. The stem is like an erect column. It has smooth light coloured bark. The crown of the tree is rounded or open. Young twigs, leaves and buds are usually bright red. The leaves are deeply divided like the fingers on a hand. There are 3 larger leaf lobes and 2 smaller side lobes. The leaves are 10 cm long. The edges of the leaves are like teeth on a saw. The leaves are bright green on top and bluish green underneath. They turn red in the autumn. The red flowers occur in many branched clusters. They stick upwards. The seeds occur double in seed containers with wings at an angle. The wings are 12-25 mm long.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. A native of north America. It requires deep fertile soils. It needs a sheltered position and is best in light shade. It is frost resistant but is damaged by drought. It can grow in acid soils. Often it grows in swamps and on moist soils. It suits hardiness zones 4-8. Arboretum Tasmania.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It is grown from ripened seed.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Trees live for 100 years.

NOTES

There are about 120-150 Acer species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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