

Norway maple

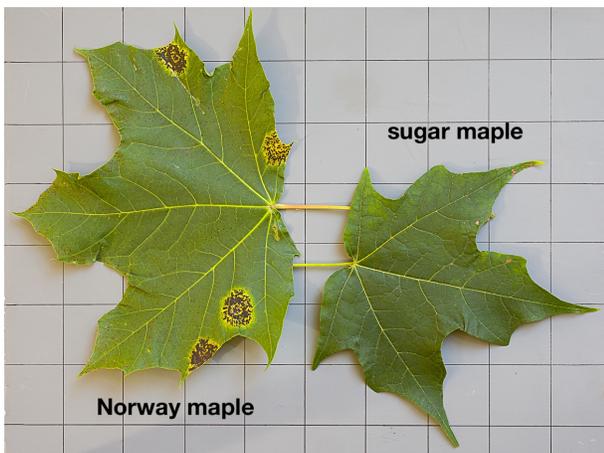
Acer platanoides

Identification:

Sapindaceae (Soapberry family)

Perennial tree, deciduous Height: 40-60' Width: 2/3 Leaf Arrangement: opposite
 Flower: Yellow Blooms: Late spring Fruit: Samara Fall Color:

Norway maple can grow to 60 feet. It is very similar to our native sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), but several key characteristics can help you distinguished the two. The leaf shape of these species is very similar and both are variable. However, Norway maple leaves are wider than they are long with 5-7 shallow lobes and prominent large teeth on the leaf margins. Sugar maple leaves are about equally long as they are wide, with 3-5 lobes and smoother margins. Norway maple leaves are more often infected by a fungal condition called tar spot, which is rarely found on sugar maple. Norway maple sap is a milky white, which can be observed if a leaf is plucked from the tree. Sugar maple have a fiery yellow, orange, red and burgundy fall color. Norway maple by contrast simply turn yellow, and they turn color slightly later than most trees making them stand-out in late-fall woodlands. During winter months, look for the large, rounded, reddish buds of Norway maple, whereas sugar maple buds are, smaller and sharply pointed at the tip. Norway mpale flowers are large relative to most other maples and cause the trees to take on a sickly yellow-green cast in spring before leaf-out. The fruit, show significant differences with the wings of Norway maple samaras being nearly horizontal while the wings of sugar maple samaras point downward. Norway maple bark has a pattern of vertical stripes in young plants, which become vertical ridges in mature trees. Sugar maple bark lakes these vertical stripes when young and matures to have thick, flaky plates.



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AKA:

Description & Impact:

Norway maple is a tree originating from Eurasia. It has a dense canopy that shades out native vegetation and is often planted as a street tree. Norway maple is frequently mistaken for the native sugar maple and has been shown to out-compete the sugar maple in natural areas. It is very shade tolerant and is often found spreading into disturbed forest communities near urban areas. Norway maple has a dense, shallow root system, which releases poisonous chemicals into the soil that kill other plants. Studies have shown that forests dominated by Norway maples have a greatly diminished plant species diversity.

Control Methods:

Conventional: The typical approach to control is felling the tree and treating cut stumps with a solution of glyphosate (Roundup®, etc.) mixed with water or a triclopyr (Garlon® 4, etc.) mixed with oil. will be effective at any time of year, other than during spring sap flow. Note that herbicide need only be applied only to the cambium, the ring of inner bark, which is the only live portion of the stump and which is responsible for transporting nutrients to the root system.

In cases where it is safe to leave a dead standing tree, a few other methods may be employed that would save time and effort. An oil based solution of triclopyr can be used for basal bark treatment for trees under 6" in diameter. Trees can be girdled using a chain saw or hand tools with above herbicides typically applied to the lower cut. Hack-and-squirt treatment with triclopyr is an additional option. Always read herbicide labels carefully before use and apply according to the instruction on the product label.

Chemical-Free Options: Seedlings can be pulled. Saplings can be pulled with the aid of a weed wrench, or the root can be severed several inches below the ground level with a sharp shovel.

More mature trees will resprout vigorously after cutting. Using critical period cutting, though untested on Norway maple, may be able to exhaust the roots and kill the tree, though persistence will be required. The first cut should be in late-spring immediately after leaf-out. This cut should be as high as is practical, but also below the height of any leaves. When the stump resprouts a few weeks later, remove any leaf growth as these leaves are expanding either by cutting newly sprouting stems or cutting the entire trunk lower. Monitoring and multiple cuttings may be needed to fully exhaust the root system.

Larger trees can be girdled by cutting into the inner bark and removing a 2 to 5" strip of bark from the lower trunk. This is best done in late spring when sap is flowing. The tree will then die slowly over the course of 1 to 2 years. If girdling is done too deep, it will cause the Norway maple to resprout.

Frequent prescribed burns through your woods is the best way to prevent the establishment of seedlings.

Revegetation Recommendations: Red maple (*Acer rubrum*), sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), American basswood (*Tilia americana*) and red oak (*Quercus rubra*) are all fine native trees for semi-shade to sunny environments. For street trees, we would like to see more use of oaks, such as black oak (*Quercus velutina*), bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) and swamp white oak (*Quercus bicolor*) so as to better represent the historic oak savannas of our region.

Citations: