

Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*)

DESCRIPTION:

Norway maple is a deciduous 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 outcompete 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.

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Exotic
Invasive

IDENTIFICATION:

Norway maple can grow to 60 feet. It can be distinguished from native maples by its leaf shape and milky sap that exudes from broken leaves or stems. Norway maple leaves are wider than they are long, whereas sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) leaves are approximately as equally long as they are wide. Norway maple has rounded buds whereas sugar maple buds are sharp and pointed. Another distinguishing characteristic is the fruit, known as samara. The double samaras of Norway maple point outward and away from each other. In sugar maples the double samaras point downward.



CONTROL METHODS:

Organic: When removing saplings a shovel or a weed wrench will work. If cut, larger trees will resprout so repeated cutting will be needed to kill the plant. 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. Periodic controlled burns through your woods will prevent the establishment of Norway maple seedlings.

Chemical: Treat cut stumps with a solution of glyphosate (Roundup®, etc.) mixed with water or a triclopyr (Garlon® 4, etc.) mixed with oil. An oil based solution of triclopyr can be used for basal bark treatment for trees under 6 inches in diameter. Avoid treating in spring when sap is flowing up to the leaves.

Always read herbicide labels carefully before use and always apply according to the instruction on the product label.



NATIVE ALTERNATIVES:

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.

