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Katsura Japanese Maple

Acer palmatum 'Katsura'

Height: 15 feet

Spread: 15 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 5

Description:

Striking small tree grown for its ever-changing foliage, starting yellow then to chartreuse and finally brilliant orange in the fall; most attractive when grown in a multi-stemmed form; a great accent tree for the front yard



Katsura Japanese Maple foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Katsura Japanese Maple
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Katsura Japanese Maple is primarily valued in the landscape for its ornamental upright and spreading habit of growth. It features subtle corymbs of red flowers rising above the foliage in mid spring before the leaves. It has attractive chartreuse deciduous foliage which emerges yellow in spring. The lobed palmate leaves are highly ornamental and turn an outstanding orange in the fall. The rough gray bark and deep purple branches are extremely showy and add significant winter interest.

Landscape Attributes

Katsura Japanese Maple is an open deciduous tree with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance tree, and should only be pruned in summer after the leaves have fully developed, as it may 'bleed' sap if pruned in late winter or early spring. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Katsura Japanese Maple is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade
- Mass Planting

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Planting & Growing

Katsura Japanese Maple will grow to be about 15 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 15 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 3 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 80 years or more.

This tree does best in full sun to partial shade. You may want to keep it away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.



Katsura Japanese Maple foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder