

Norway Maple

Acer Platanoides

The Norway maple is a deciduous tree that reaches a height of 40-50 feet, occasionally exceeding 90 feet. The leaves are dark green and 4 inches to 7 inches wide with 5 lobes. The mature tree has a rounded crown of dense foliage and the bark is grayish-black and furrowed. It is distinguished from other maples by the milky fluid that oozes from freshly broken leaf stems. The tree leafs out and produces seeds earlier than other maples. Its normal fall foliage is pale yellow.

The Norway Maples are native to Europe, from Norway southward. It was introduced into the United States about 1756 by John Bartram of Philadelphia after being cultivated in England in 1683. John Bartram corresponded with Philip Miller in England who sent him seedlings and was soon offering Norway maples in the United States. Another introduction of Norway maple was made by William Hamilton circa 1784. In 1792, George Washington ordered two Norway maples from John Bartram.

The Norway maple is an ornamental tree, considered “well adapted” for streets and park avenues and was regarded as sufficiently tested in America by 1883. Under ideal conditions in its native range, Norway maple may live up to 250 years, but often has a much shorter life expectancy; in North America, for example, sometimes only 60 years.

The Norway maple tree wood is hard and it is used for furniture and turnery. In Europe, it is used for furniture, flooring and musical instruments. It has become a popular species for bonsai in Europe as well and is used for medium to large bonsai sizes and a multitude of styles.

The Norway maple is a value to some wildlife as well. A number of moth caterpillars feed on the leaves, and the flowers provide nectar and pollen for bees and other insects. Birds and small mammals eat the seeds

As you approach the intersection of 1000 E. and 330 N. in the Salt Lake City Cemetery, look to the north and admire the mature Norway maple trees that line the street.

