

Southern Magnolia

Magnolia grandiflora

This large, stately, native North American evergreen tree with its large, beautiful, saucer shaped, fragrant flowers is a southern landscape tradition. It is the state tree of Mississippi. Capable of growing at a moderate rate to a height of 80 feet or more with a spread of 50 feet, Southern Magnolia forms a dense, dark green, pyramidal shape, the lower branches almost bending to the ground. Branches are typically numerous and small in diameter, though it can be trained to grow straight and tall. Leaves are shed as new ones form randomly throughout the year. Leaf litter can be a problem in manicured landscapes.



Identification

Leaves

Evergreen, alternate, simple, oval or ovate, pinnately venated, 8-12 inches long, deep and glossy green above, fuzzy red-brown below.



Bark/Wood

Bark is thin and easily damaged from mechanical impact. Mottled and scaly. Branches droop.



Flower/Fruit

Monoecious; perfect, creamy to yellowy white, very large, pleasantly smelling, spring to summer. Fruit is upright, conical, 3-6" tall with many seeds.



Form

A medium sized tree with irregular, oval, or pyramidal form. Very dense, evergreen canopy with a coarse texture. Widely spreading roots.



Uses

Exclusively used as a garden, ornamental, or landscape specimen.

Ethnobotany

Native Distribution

Southeastern United States north to Maryland.

Establishment

Field grown plants difficult to transplant. Container plants do much better.

Growing Conditions and Culture

Mature Size 90'Hx40'Wx3'dbh
 USDA Zone 7-10
 Light Requirements Part to Full Sun

Soils
 Drought Tolerant?
 Inundation Tolerant?

Diverse
 Moderate
 Yes

Pests/Damaging Agents

Scales of various forms will infest twigs and leaves. Overwintering scales controllable with horticultural oils. Leaf spot, blights, and scabs common, but not usually fatal.

Similar Species

Propagation

Seed. Cuttings.

Source(s)