



## *Nyssa sinensis* Chinese Tupelo<sup>1</sup>

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### INTRODUCTION

The deciduous Chinese Tupelo probably grows 35 to 50 feet tall and almost as wide in a rounded shape (Fig. 1). Like many other *Nyssa*, young trees grow with a pyramidal habit. The six-inch-long, green leaves turn brilliant shades of red, yellow, and orange in fall before dropping. Small, greenish-white flowers appear in the spring in axillary clusters and are followed by small blue fruits. These are visible when they drop and stain sidewalks for a period of time but they wash away quickly following a rain.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Scientific name:** *Nyssa sinensis*

**Pronunciation:** NISS-uh sigh-NEN-sis

**Common name(s):** Chinese Tupelo

**Family:** *Nyssaceae*

**USDA hardiness zones:** 7 through 9 (Fig. 2)

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size); wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; reclamation plant; shade tree; specimen; residential street tree; no proven urban tolerance

**Availability:** grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

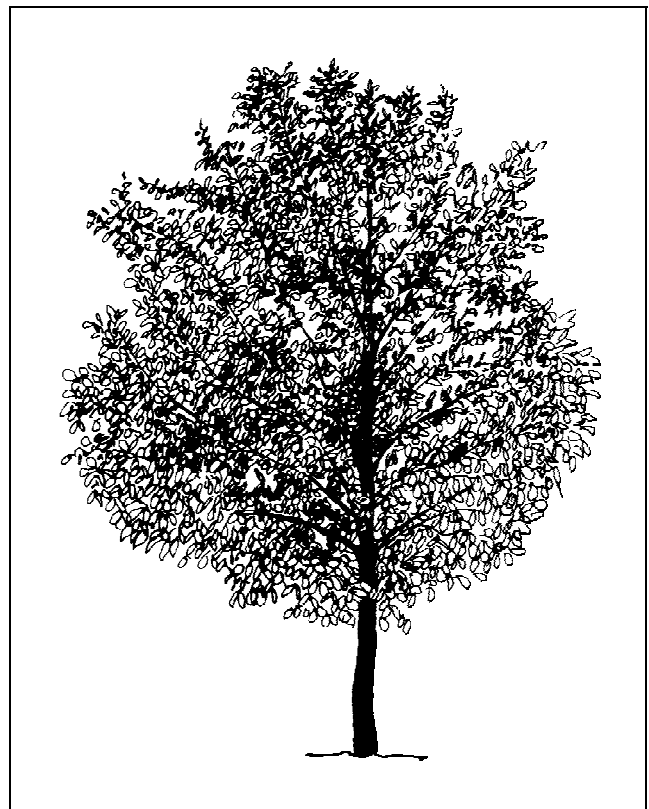


Figure 1. Young Chinese Tupelo.

### DESCRIPTION

**Height:** 35 to 50 feet

**Spread:** 25 to 35 feet

**Crown uniformity:** symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms

**Crown shape:** oval; round

**Crown density:** moderate

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Growth rate:** fast  
**Texture:** medium

**Foliage**

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate (Fig. 3)  
**Leaf type:** simple  
**Leaf margin:** entire; serrate  
**Leaf shape:** elliptic (oval)  
**Leaf venation:** banchidodrome; pinnate  
**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous  
**Leaf blade length:** 4 to 8 inches; 2 to 4 inches  
**Leaf color:** green  
**Fall color:** red; yellow  
**Fall characteristic:** showy

**Flower**

**Flower characteristics:** inconspicuous and not showy; spring flowering

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** round  
**Fruit length:** < .5 inch  
**Fruit covering:** fleshy

**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter problem

**Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; not particularly showy; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns  
**Pruning requirement:** needs little pruning to develop a strong structure  
**Breakage:** resistant  
**Current year twig color:** green  
**Current year twig thickness:** medium

**Culture**

**Light requirement:** tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in full sun  
**Soil tolerances:** clay; loam; sand; acidic; occasionally wet; well-drained  
**Drought tolerance:** high

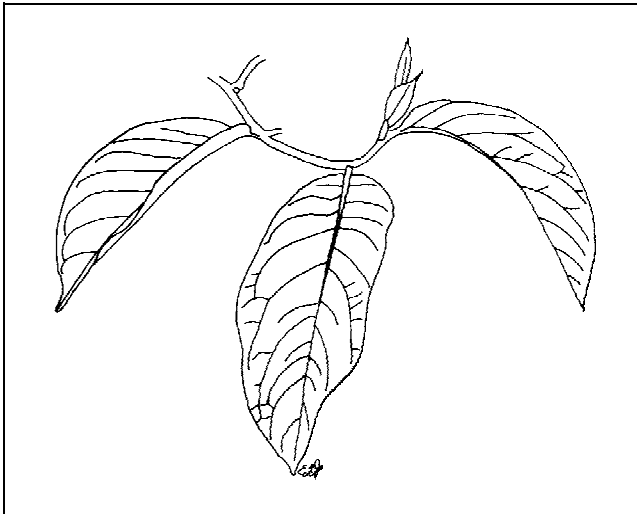


Figure 3. Foliage of Chinese Tupelo.

### Other

**Roots:** surface roots are usually not a problem

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding tree:** not particularly outstanding

**Invasive potential:** little, if any, potential at this time

**Pest resistance:** unknown

### USE AND MANAGEMENT

Chinese Tupelo should be grown in full sun on moist, well-drained soil. The tree has not been grown in many places in this country and little else is known about the tree.

### Pests and Diseases

Little is known about the susceptibility of this tree to pests and diseases.