



Nyssa sinensis Chinese Tupelo¹

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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

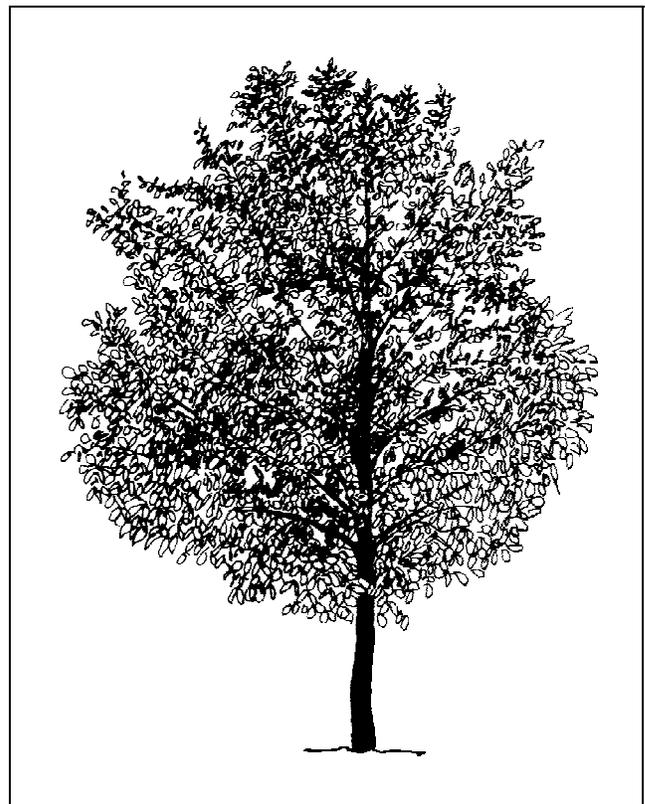


Figure 1. Young Chinese Tupelo.

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

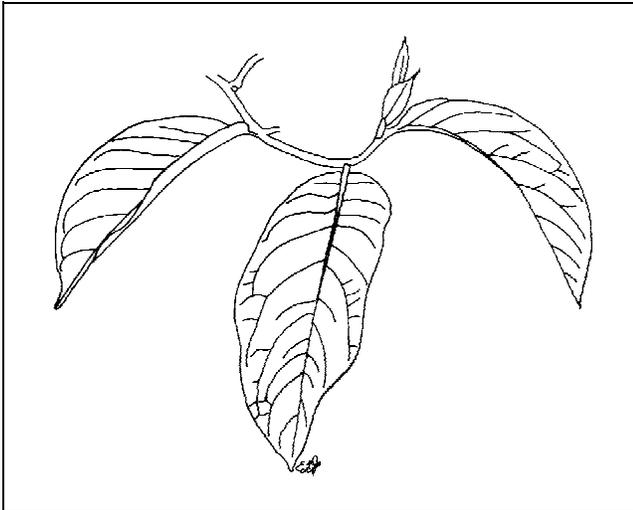


Figure 3. Foliage of Chinese Tupelo.

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.