

Acer leucoderme Chalk Maple¹

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson²

INTRODUCTION

This 25 to 30-foot-tall native North American tree is reportedly quite similar to *Acer barbatum* or Florida Maple and is often seen with multiple trunks (Fig. 1). The chalky white or light gray bark is quite attractive, with the bark on older trees becoming ridged and blackened near the ground. The two to three-inch-diameter, lobed leaves, with fuzzy undersides, give a spectacular display in the fall months, ranging from shimmering yellow to vivid orange and deep red.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Acer leucoderme*

Pronunciation: AY-ser loo-koe-DER-mee

Common name(s): Chalk Maple, Whitebark Maple

Family: *Aceraceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 5B through 8 (Fig. 2)

Origin: native to North America

Uses: large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size); wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; near a deck or patio; reclamation plant; shade tree; specimen

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

DESCRIPTION

Height: 25 to 30 feet

Spread: 15 to 30 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more

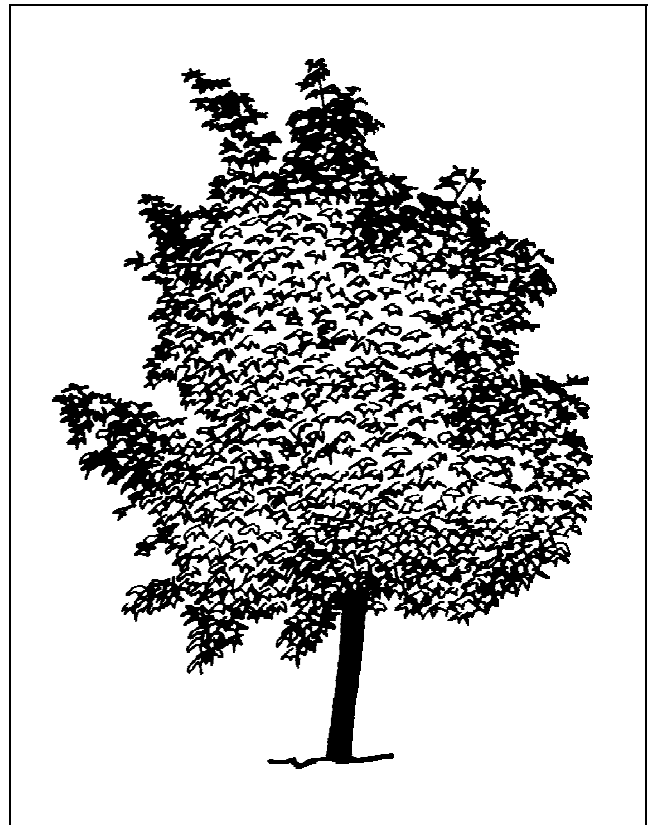


Figure 1. Middle-aged Chalk Maple.

or less identical crown forms

Crown shape: oval

Crown density: dense

Growth rate: slow

Texture: medium

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2. Edward F. Gilman, associate professor, Environmental Horticulture Department; Dennis G. Watson, associate professor, Agricultural Engineering Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611.



Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Foliage

- Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite
- Leaf type:** simple
- Leaf margin:** lobed; entire
- Leaf shape:** star-shaped
- Leaf venation:** palmate
- Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous
- Leaf blade length:** 4 to 8 inches; 2 to 4 inches
- Leaf color:** green
- Fall color:** orange; red; yellow
- Fall characteristic:** showy

Flower

- Flower color:** green; yellow
- Flower characteristics:** inconspicuous and not showy

Fruit

- Fruit shape:** elongated
- Fruit length:** 1 to 3 inches
- Fruit covering:** dry or hard
- Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter

problem

Trunk and Branches

- Trunk/bark/branches:** bark is thin and easily damaged from mechanical impact; routinely grown with, or trainable to be grown with, multiple trunks; grow mostly upright and will not droop; showy trunk; tree wants to grow with several trunks but can be trained to grow with a single trunk; no thorns
- Pruning requirement:** requires pruning to develop strong structure
- Breakage:** resistant
- Current year twig color:** brown
- Current year twig thickness:** medium

Culture

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

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: tree has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

Outstanding tree: not particularly outstanding

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

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: susceptible

Pest resistance: no pests are normally seen on the tree

USE AND MANAGEMENT

The striking white bark makes this Maple well suited for planting as a specimen displayed against a dark background. A row of these Maples planted along a dark glass building wall or other dark structure would get people's attention. Surprisingly underused, this small Maple is well suited for a variety of sites, including residences.

Chalk Maple grows well in full sun, partial shade, or deep shade, and has a high tolerance for dry soils. The tree is quite popular in the midwest in areas with alkaline soil pH.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.