

Acer leucoderme: Chalk Maple¹

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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. 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 8B (Fig. 2)

Origin: native to North America

Invasive potential: little invasive potential

Uses: deck or patio; shade; reclamation; specimen; parking lot island 100-200 sq ft; parking lot island > 200 sq ft; tree lawn 4-6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft wide; highway median

Availability: not native to North America

Description

Height: 25 to 30 feet

Spread: 15 to 30 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical

Crown shape: oval

Crown density: dense

Growth rate: slow



Figure 1. Middle-aged *Acer leucoderme*: Chalk Maple

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire, lobed

Leaf shape: star-shaped

Leaf venation: palmate

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches, 2 to 4 inches

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Figure 2. Range

Leaf color: green

Fall color: yellow, red, orange

Fall characteristic: showy

Flower

Flower color: yellow, green

Flower characteristics: not showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: elongated

Fruit length: 1 to 3 inches

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: unknown

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; not showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: branches don't droop; showy; typically multi-trunked; thorns

Pruning requirement: needed for strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: brown

Current year twig thickness: medium

Wood specific gravity: unknown

Culture

Light requirement: full sun, partial sun or partial shade, shade tolerant

Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; acidic; slightly alkaline; occasionally wet; well-drained

Drought tolerance: high

Aerosol salt tolerance: unknown

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: yes

Outstanding tree: no

Ozone sensitivity: unknown

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: susceptible

Pest resistance: free of serious pests and diseases

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.