

# *Malus sargentii*: Sargent Crabapple<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

Sargent Crabapple is a dwarf, deciduous tree, forming a dense, wide-spreading, irregularly-rounded silhouette, six to eight feet high by 8 to 10 feet wide. The small, fragrant, springtime blossoms start out as red or pink buds but open to sparkling white flowers. The small, dark red, persistent fruits which follow are extremely popular with birds and other wildlife. They can create a litter problem beneath the canopy as the fruit droops in fall and winter.

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Malus sargentii*

**Pronunciation:** MAY-lus sar-JEN-tee-eye

**Common name(s):** Sargent Crabapple

**Family:** *Rosaceae*

**USDA hardiness zones:** 4A through 8A (Fig. 2)

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Invasive potential:** little invasive potential

**Uses:** espalier; specimen; screen; container or planter; trained as a standard; Bonsai

**Availability:** not native to North America

## Description

**Height:** 6 to 12 feet

**Spread:** 8 to 15 feet

**Crown uniformity:** irregular

**Crown shape:** round, vase, spreading

**Crown density:** dense

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** medium

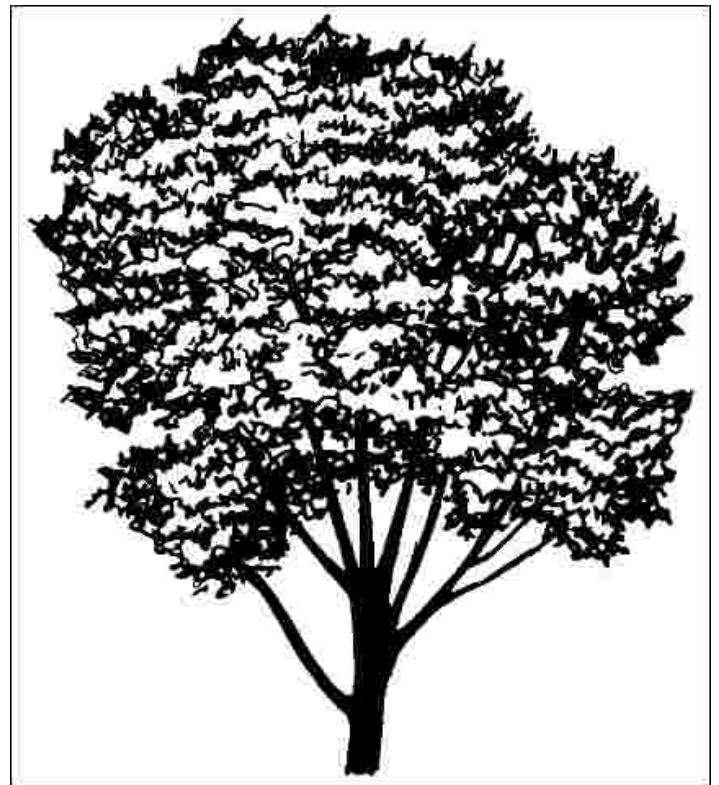


Figure 1. Middle-aged *Malus sargentii*: Sargent Crabapple

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate (Fig. 3)

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** serrate

**Leaf shape:** elliptic (oval)

**Leaf venation:** pinnate, brachidodrome

**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous

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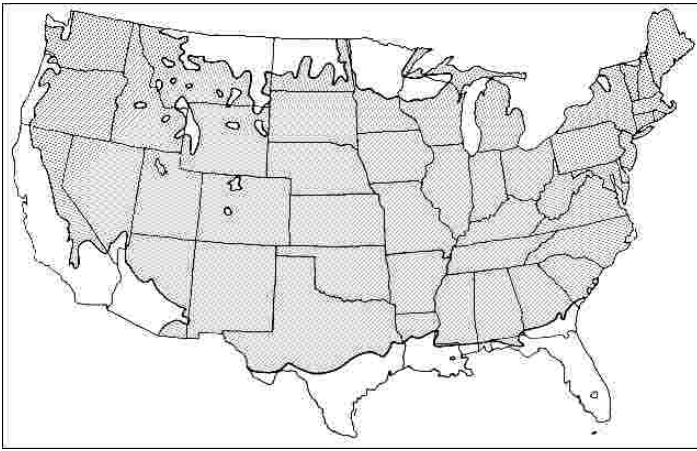


Figure 2. Range

**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** yellow, orange

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

### Flower

**Flower color:** white/cream/gray

**Flower characteristics:** very showy

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** round

**Fruit length:** less than .5 inch

**Fruit covering:** fleshy

**Fruit color:** red

**Fruit characteristics:** attracts birds; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** branches droop; showy; typically multi-trunked; thorns

**Pruning requirement:** little required

**Breakage:** resistant

**Current year twig color:** brown

**Current year twig thickness:** thin, medium

**Wood specific gravity:** unknown

### Culture

**Light requirement:** full sun

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

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Aerosol salt tolerance:** low

### Other

**Roots:** not a problem

**Winter interest:** no

**Outstanding tree:** yes

**Ozone sensitivity:** sensitive

**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** resistant

**Pest resistance:** resistant to pests/diseases

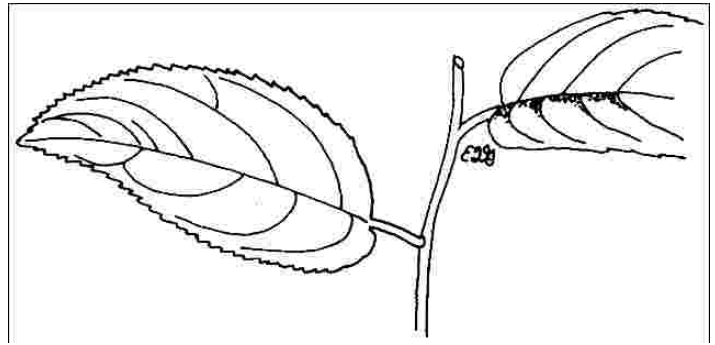


Figure 3. Foliage

## Use and Management

This dense, compact spreading shrub or small tree makes an outstanding specimen around a residential or commercial landscape. It can be purchased as a single or multi-trunked tree. Select a single-trunked tree for street and parking lot locations. It looks great growing out of a low groundcover, located in a bed with low-growing shrubs, or placed toward the rear of a shrub border. A row would make a nice screen during the summer months.

Sargent Crabapple grows in moist, well-drained, acid soil in full sun locations for best flowering and disease resistance. They are not recommended for sandy soil due to their inability to tolerate drought, but any other soil is suitable, including clay. Unlike many other Crabapples, Sargent Crabapple is only slightly susceptible to scab, fireblight, and leaf spot. This makes it one of the best for the South. Crabapples grow well in the Texas panhandle but are not extremely drought tolerant and are not well suited for high pH soil.

Contact the Ornamental Crabapple Society, Morton Arboretum, Lisle, Illinois 60532 for more information on Crabapples.

### Pests

Aphids infest branch tips and suck plant juices.

Fall webworm makes nests on the branches and feeds inside the nest. Small nests can be pruned out or sprayed with *Bacillus thuringiensis*.

Scales of various types are usually controlled with horticultural oil.

Mites are too small to see easily so can cause much foliage discoloration before being detected. Mites are usually controlled with horticultural oil.

Tent caterpillar builds tents or nests in trees in early summer or late spring. Feeding occurs outside the nest. Small nests are pruned out or simply pulled from the tree and caterpillars crushed. Spray with *Bacillus thuringiensis*. Do not burn nests while they are still in the tree since this injures the tree and could start an uncontrolled fire.

## Diseases

Sargent Crabapple shows good disease-resistance.

Scab infection takes place early in the season and dark olive green spots appear on the leaves. In late summer the infected leaves fall off when they turn yellow with black spots. Infected fruits have black, slightly raised spots. Use resistant varieties.

Fire blight susceptible trees have blighted branch tips. Leaves on infected branch tips turn brown or black, droop, and hang on the branches. The leaves look scorched as by a fire. The trunk and main branches become infected when the bacteria are washed down the branches. Cankers form and are separated from adjacent healthy bark by a crack. The infected bark may be shredded. Use resistant cultivars when available.

Powdery mildew is a fungus which coats leaves with mycelia resembling white powder.

Rust causes brown to rusty-orange spots on the leaves. Badly spotted leaves fall prematurely. Redcedars are the alternate host.

Crabapples are subject to several canker diseases. Prune out infected branches, avoid unnecessary wounding, and keep trees healthy.