Introduction

This male cultivar of Ginkgo is practically pest-free, resistant to storm damage, and casts light shade due to the narrow crown. It has a dense, fat columnar form growing to about 65 feet tall with a 15 to 20-foot-wide crown. It makes a durable street tree where there is limited vertical overhead space. Other narrow upright cultivars include ‘Fairmont’ and ‘Fastigiata.’ Ginkgo tolerates most soil, including compacted, and alkaline. The tree is easily transplanted and has a vivid yellow fall color which is second to none in brilliance, even in the south. However, leaves fall quickly and the fall color show is short.

General Information

Scientific name: Ginkgo biloba
Pronunciation: GINK-go bye-LOE-buh
Common name(s): ‘Princeton Sentry’ Maidenhair Tree, ‘Princeton Sentry’ Ginkgo
Family: Ginkgoaceae
USDA hardiness zones: 3B through 8A (Fig. 2)
Origin: not native to North America
Invasive potential: little invasive potential
Uses: street without sidewalk; sidewalk cutout (tree pit); tree lawn > 6 ft wide; urban tolerant; highway median; Bonsai; tree lawn 4-6 feet wide

Figure 1. Middle-aged Ginkgo biloba ‘Princeton Sentry’: ‘Princeton Sentry’ Maidenhair Tree
Credits: Ed Gilman

Figure 2. Range
Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree

Description
Height: 50 to 65 feet
Spread: 15 to 20 feet
Crown uniformity: symmetrical
Crown shape: columnar, upright/erect
Crown density: dense
Growth rate: fast
Texture: medium

Foliage
Leaf arrangement: alternate (Fig. 3)
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: lobed
Leaf shape: fan-shaped
Leaf venation: parallel, palmate
Leaf type and persistence: deciduous
Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: yellow
Fall characteristic: showy

Figure 3. Foliage

Flower
Flower color: green
Flower characteristics: not showy

Fruit
Fruit shape: no fruit
Fruit length: no fruit
Fruit covering: no fruit
Fruit color: no fruit
Fruit characteristics: no fruit

Trunk and Branches
Trunk/bark/branches: branches don't droop; showy; typically one trunk; thorns
Pruning requirement: little required
Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: brown, gray
Current year twig thickness: medium, thick
Wood specific gravity: unknown

Culture
Light requirement: full sun, partial sun or partial shade
Soil tolerances: sand; loam; clay; acidic; alkaline; well-drained; occasionally wet
Drought tolerance: high
Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

Other
Roots: not a problem
Winter interest: yes
Outstanding tree: yes
Ozone sensitivity: unknown
Verticillium wilt susceptibility: resistant
Pest resistance: free of serious pests and diseases

Use and Management
Ginkgo may grow extremely slow for several years after planting, but will then pick up and grow at a moderate rate, particularly if it receives an adequate supply of water and some fertilizer. But do not overwater or plant in a poorly-drained area. Very tolerant of urban soils and pollution, Ginkgo could be used more in USDA hardiness zone 7 but is not recommended in central and southern Texas or Oklahoma due to summer heat. Adapted for use as a street tree, even in confined soil spaces. Some early pruning to form one central leader and to eliminate vigorous upright branches is helpful.

There are several other cultivars: 'Autumn Gold' - male, fruitless, bright gold fall color and rapid growth rate; 'Fairmont' - upright, oval to pyramidal form; 'Fastigiata' - male, fruitless, upright growth; 'Laciniata' - leaf margins deeply divided; 'Lakeview' - male, fruitless, compact broad conical form; 'Mayfield' - male, upright fastigiate (columnar) growth; 'Pendula' - pendent branches; 'Santa Cruz' - umbrella-shaped, 'Variegata' - variegated leaves.

Propagation is by seed or grafting males.

Pests and Diseases
This tree is pest-free and considered resistant to gypsy moth.