

# Faber's Maple: *Acer fabri*<sup>1</sup>

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Figure 1. Faber's maple.

Credit: Gary Knox, UF/IFAS

*Acer fabri* (Faber's Maple) is unlike the maples familiar to most people, because it does not have the typical three- or five-lobed leaves. Instead, the leaves of Faber's maple are unlobed, slender, and very glossy. Additionally, most people know the maple as a deciduous tree, dropping its leaves in fall, whereas Faber's maple is evergreen.

Sometimes called Emerald Jade Maple, Faber's maple grows as a small, broad tree that matures at a height of 20 to 30 feet but usually is smaller in a garden setting. The leaves on new growth are tinted red, and the familiar "helicopter" fruits (samaras), appearing in September, are also red. New growth on some trees has more red coloration than on others, suggesting the possibility of selecting forms with more red coloration.

Hardiness is not confirmed but it is believed to be adapted to [USDA Cold Hardiness Zones](#) 6–9. Leaves reportedly senesce and fall when winter temperatures drop to the low 20s or high teens (°F). Accordingly, Faber's maple is likely to be evergreen in most of Florida and semi-evergreen or deciduous after cold winters or in the cooler areas of its hardiness range.



Figure 2. Close-up of the red-tinted leaves and fruits of Faber's maple.

Credit: Gary Knox, UF/IFAS

Faber's maple is native to the mixed forests of Vietnam and central and southern China, where it is known as *luo fu jeng*. This slow-growing tree fares best in sites with shade to partial sun and well-drained soil. No serious pests are known at this time.

The reddish new growth, glossy green leaves, red fruits, and growth as a small evergreen tree collectively make this a very ornamental tree. Rarely cultivated, Faber's maple deserves to be planted and evaluated more widely. It can be propagated by seeds or summer cuttings.

*Acer fabri* (Faber's maple) has not yet been evaluated using the UF/IFAS Assessment of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas (<http://assessment.ifas.ufl.edu/>). Without this assessment, the temporary conclusion is that *A. fabri* is not a problem species at this time and may be recommended.

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