

# *Magnolia x soulangiana* 'Coates' 'Coates' Saucer Magnolia<sup>1</sup>

Edward F. Gilman, Ryan W. Klein, and Gail Hansen<sup>2</sup>

## Introduction

Young Japanese or saucer magnolia are distinctly upright, becoming more oval, then round by 10 years of age. Blooms open in late winter in the southern part of its range to early spring in the northern part of its range before the leaves emerge. Flowers are large, shaded in light pink on the outside of the petals and white on the inside, creating a spectacular flower display. Even young trees can develop a beautiful flower display. However, a late frost can often ruin the flowers in all areas where it is grown. In warmer climates, the late-flowering selections avoid frost damage, but some are less showy than the early-flowered forms, which blossom when little else is in flower.

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Magnolia x soulangiana* 'Coates'

**Pronunciation:** mag-NO-lee-uh x soo-lan-jee-AY-nuh

**Common name(s):** 'Coates' saucer magnolia

**Family:** *Magnoliaceae*

**Plant type:** shrub

**USDA hardiness zones:** 5 through 9A (Figure 3)

**Planting month for zone 7:** year-round



Figure 1. Full Form - *Magnolia x soulangiana* 'Coates': 'Coates' Saucer Magnolia

Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS

**Planting month for zone 8:** year-round

**Planting month for zone 9:** year-round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

1. This document is FPS-368, one of a series of the Department of Environmental Horticulture, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date October 1999. Revised October 2023. Visit the EDIS website at <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu> for the currently supported version of this publication.

2. Edward F. Gilman, professor emeritus; Ryan W. Klein, assistant professor, arboriculture; and Gail Hansen, professor, sustainable landscape design; Department of Environmental Horticulture, UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

**Uses:** near a deck or patio; container or above-ground planter; espalier

**Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant



Figure 2. Flower - *Magnolia x soulangiana* 'Coates': 'Coates' Saucer Magnolia

Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS

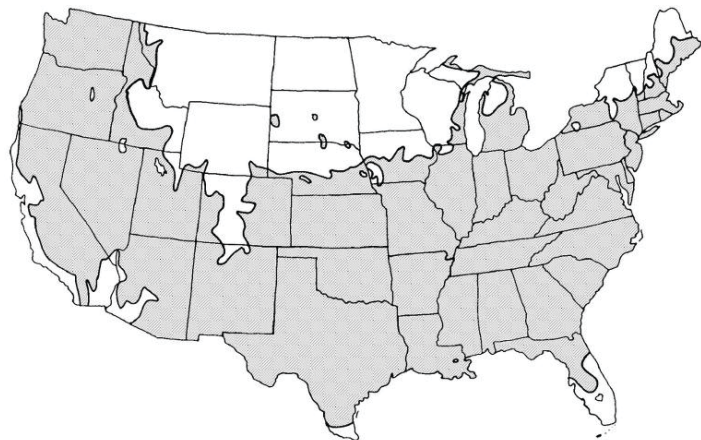


Figure 3. Shaded area represents potential range.

## Description

**Height:** 20 to 25 feet

**Spread:** 15 to 25 feet

**Plant habit:** upright; round

**Plant density:** open

**Growth rate:** moderate

**Texture:** coarse

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** undulate

**Leaf shape:** obovate

**Leaf venation:** pinnate

**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous

**Leaf blade length:** 4 to 8 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** yellow

**Fall characteristic:** showy

## Flower

**Flower color:** purple

**Flower characteristic:** spring flowering; winter flowering

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** irregular

**Fruit length:** 1 to 3 inches

**Fruit cover:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** red

**Fruit characteristic:** rarely fruits

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** no thorns; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems

**Current year stem/twig color:** brown

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** medium

## Culture

**Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun

**Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; loam; acidic

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerances:** unknown

**Plant spacing:** 36 to 60 inches

## Other

**Roots:** usually not a problem

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

**Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

## Use and Management

The tree is best used as a specimen in a sunny spot where it can develop a symmetrical crown. It develops an open canopy but flowers fine in a partially shaded spot. It can be pruned up if planted close to a walk or patio to allow for pedestrian clearance but probably looks its best when branches are left to droop to the ground. The light gray bark shows off nicely, particularly during the winter when the tree is bare.

Transplant in the spring, just before growth begins, and use balled and burlapped or containerized plants. Pruning wounds may not close well, so train plants early in their life to develop the desired form to avoid large pruning wounds.

## Pests and Diseases

It is generally pest free, but scales of various types may infest twigs and foliage. Magnolia may be subject to leaf spots. Canker diseases will kill entire branches.