

***Platanus orientalis*: Oriental Planetree¹**

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Introduction

This deciduous tree is one of the parents of the popular London planetree (*Platanus x acerifolia*) and has more deeply lobed leaves than its offspring (Figure 1). Leaves are almost maple-like. Capable of reaching 80 feet in height, the Oriental planetree has very strong branches and is quite useful as a shade tree. The wood is so tough, dense, and hard it is often used for butcher's blocks and furniture. The springtime flowers are followed by fruits which are found on stalks in groups of three to six. The attractive bark is cream colored and flaky and very striking in the winter.



Figure 1. Mature *Platanus orientalis*: Oriental planetree.
Credits: Ed Gilman, UF/IFAS

General Information

Scientific name: *Platanus orientalis*

Pronunciation: PLAT-uh-nus or-ee-en-TAY-liss

Common name(s): Oriental Planetree

Family: *Platanaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 7A through 9A (Figure 2)

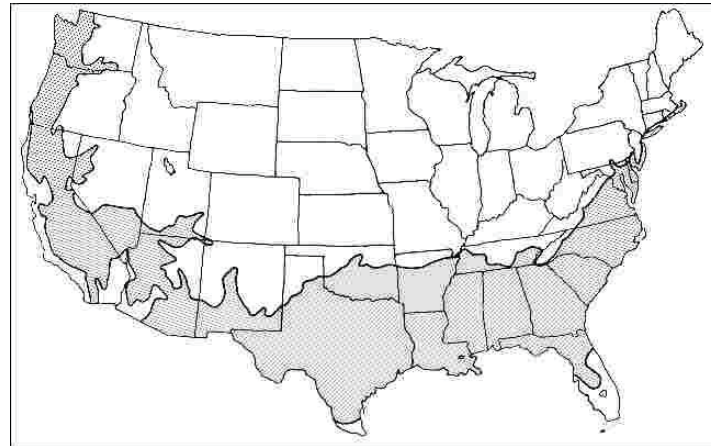


Figure 2. Range.
Credits: UF/IFAS

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: not assessed/incomplete assessment

Uses: shade

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Description

Height: 70 to 80 feet

Spread: 50 to 70 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical

Crown shape: round, pyramidal

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: fast

Texture: coarse

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Figure 3)

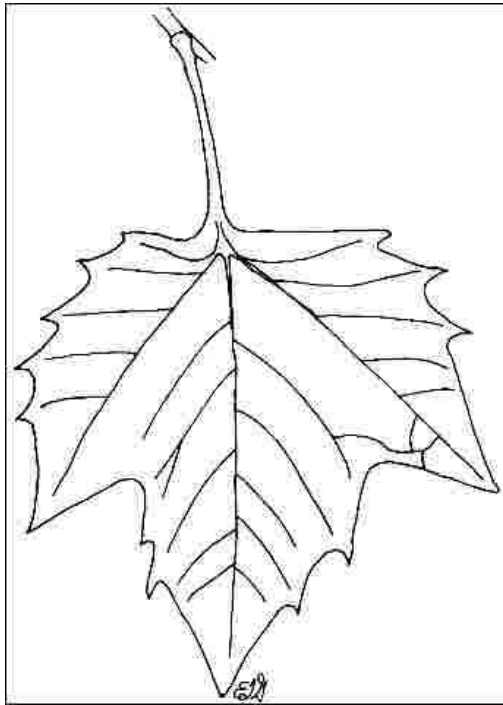


Figure 3. Foliage.

Credits: UF/IFAS

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: incised, lobed

Leaf shape: ovate, star-shaped

Leaf venation: palmate

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: yellow

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: unknown

Flower characteristics: not showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: 0.5 to 1 inch

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: brown, tan

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

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: branches droop; showy; typically one trunk; thorns

Pruning requirement: little required

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

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

Drought tolerance: high

Aerosol salt tolerance: unknown

Other

Roots: can form large surface roots

Winter interest: yes

Outstanding tree: no

Ozone sensitivity: sensitive

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: resistant

Pest resistance: sensitive to pests/diseases

Use and Management

It was widely planted in many northern cities, but bacterial leaf scorch and canker stain have killed many trees in these communities. If this tree is planted, do so with moderation to avoid these unfortunate problems. Naturally found along streams and floodplain riverbeds, Oriental Planetree should be grown in full sun or partial shade on moist soils. It grows on acid or alkaline soil, wet or dry. Leaves may drop early in dry years. Should be grown primarily for its resistance to anthracnose disease which can be devastating to American sycamore, but it is now rare in the trade in the United States.

Pests and Diseases

Canker stain and stem canker can severely weaken or kill trees. Anthracnose can be serious in wet years, although this planetree is more resistant than American sycamore. Lace bug, and similar insects can be pests.