

'Red Sunset' Red Maple (*Acer rubrum* 'Red Sunset')

'Red Sunset' and 'October Glory' have proven to be the best cultivars of Red Maple for the south. 'Red Sunset' has strong wood and is a vigorous, fast-grower, reaching a height of 50 feet with a spread of 25 to 35 feet.

This tree is preferred when a fast-growing maple is needed, and will take on a pyramidal or oval silhouette. The newly emerging red flowers and fruits signal that spring has come. They appear in February in north Florida. Leaves retain an attractive high gloss throughout the growing season. The seeds of 'Red Sunset' Red Maple are quite popular with squirrels and birds.

The outstanding ornamental characteristic of 'Red Sunset' red maple is the brilliant orange to red fall color lasting several weeks. It is often one of the first trees to color up in autumn, and it puts on one of the most brilliant displays of any tree.



The tree is not particular about soil type but grows best in moist soils. The tree grows rapidly and has a dense canopy in the sun but opens up in partial shade. Problems you may encounter include yellowing leaves if soil is alkaline (high pH) and/or bark splitting on the southwest side of the trunk during winter (caused by freezing and thawing). Tree wraps are available to help prevent bark splitting problems.

Information Source:

Gilman, E. F. and Watson, D.G. (1993). *Acer rubrum* 'Red Sunset': 'Red Sunset' Red Maple. University of Florida. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/st047>

Photos by: Alicia Lamborn

