

Scarlet Oak

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Description: Best known for its brilliant fall colors, the Scarlet Oak tree is well named. Its early spring foliage is often red, its inner bark is reddish, and in autumn, the leaves are brilliant red or scarlet. It is a large tree with a rounded, open crown of glossy foliage.

Height: 60- 80 feet.

Trunk Diameter: 1-2 1/2 feet.

Spread: 40 - 50 feet.

Growth Rate: Fast growing and tolerates a wide range of soils.

Leaves: 3 - 7 inches, elliptical and deeply divided.

Fall Color: Scarlet.

Flowers: April- May. Brown, faded flower color. Not noteworthy.

Fruit: Acorns 1/2 - 1 inch. Two growing seasons are required for the acorns to mature. Minimum seed-bearing age is 20 years, but maximum production does not occur until after 50 years of age. On average, good seed crops occur every 3 to 5 years, although actual seed production may be irregular and unpredictable from year to year.

Root: Scarlet oak seedlings develop a strong taproot with relatively few lateral roots.

Sun: Full sun.

Value: A popular and handsome shade and street tree with excellent fall colors. In addition to its value as a timber and wildlife species, Scarlet Oak is widely planted as an ornamental. Its brilliant red autumn color, open crown texture, and rapid growth make it a desirable tree for yard, street, and park. Scarlet Oak acorns are a choice food for eastern gray squirrels, chipmunks, mice, deer, and birds, especially blue jays and red-headed woodpeckers.

