

Acer monspessulanum
Montpellier maple, French maple



Acer monspessulanum (Montpellier maple) is widespread throughout the Mediterranean region, the Balkans and in a range from North Africa to the Middle East. The tree was first described in 1753 by Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus. As a member of the Mediterranean scrub, the Montpellier maple grows in dry and rocky habitats with, amongst others, *Carpinus orientalis, Fraxinus ornus* and *Prunus mahaleb*. The Montpellier maple is a deciduous, small to medium-sized tree. In the wild, it usually develops into a characteristic multi-stem shrub due to grazing and pollarding. As a slow-growing tree, *Acer monspessulanum* can reach a height of approximately six to ten metres with an elegant egg-shaped crown up to six metres across.

The 3-lobed leaves are small, glossy green and similar to the foliage of *Acer campestre*. As a result of adapting to the tough growing conditions they have a leathery and slightly waxy texture. The foliage changes from green to stunning yellow-orange in the autumn. The flowers are yellow-green and appear before or as the new bronze foliage emerges. The fruits are winged samaras which have a reddish colour as they develop, and later in the season turn green-brown and are distributed by the wind. The bark is greyish brown, rather corky and peels off in smallish sections. The trunk is generally twisted and knotty. The bushy habit and dense twigs provide nesting opportunities for many birds and insects.

Acer monspessulanum can put up with dry summers and heavy rainfall during the winter period provided that it is planted in a well-drained soil. This makes *Acer monspessulanum* an excellent choice as a future, healthy and long-lived tree in streets, parks and gardens. As long as it is planted in full sun, the Montpellier maple is not fussy either about having a chalky or acidic soil. Nevertheless, it is sensitive to road salt. This tree can also be used as an alternative hedging or topiary plant in warmer areas and even responds well to heavy pruning once its roots are firmly established.

SEASONAL COLOURS

jan	feb	mar	apr	mei	jun	jul	aug	sep	okt	nov	dec

TYPES OF PLANTING

Tree types: standard trees, feathered trees, multi-stemmed trees, characteristic trees, solitary shrubs | **Topiary on stem**: multi-stem umbrella

USE

Location: park, central reservation, in containers, roof garden, large garden, small garden, patio, cemetery, countryside, ecological zone | **Pavement**: none | **Planting concepts**: Eco planting, Landscape planting, urban planting

CHARACTERISTICS

Crown shape: egg-shaped | **Crown structure**: semi-open | **Height**: 6 - 10 m | **Width**: 4 - 6 m | **Winter hardiness zone**: 6A - 9B

ASPECTS

Wind: tolerant to wind | **Soil**: loess, sabulous clay, light clay, sand, loamy soil | **Nutrient level**: low in nutrients, moderately rich in nutrients, rich in nutrients | **Soil moisture level**: dry, moist | **Light requirements**: sun, partial shade | **pH range**: acidic, neutral, alkaline | **Host plant/forage plant**: bees, butterflies, birds, nectar value 5, pollen value 5 | **Extreme environments**: tolerant to dryness, tolerates heat

PLANTKENMERKEN

Flowers: raceme, striking, pendulous | **Flower colour**: yellow-green | **Flowering period**: April - May | **Leaf colour**: green | **Leaves**: deciduous, small, polished, lobate | **Autumn colour**: yellow-orange | **Fruits**: striking, winged | **Fruit colour**: red-brown | **Bark colour**: grey-black | **Bark**: slightly furrowed | **Twig colour**: brown | **Twigs**: bare | **Root system**: shallow, central root

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