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Botanical name:

Acer monspessulanum

Common name:

Montpelier Maple

Origin:

Due to the extensive natural range of Montpelier Maple there are many geographic variants.

The species is widespread in the Mediterranean area. From the Ukraine along the Black Sea, occasionally in Germany on sunny, dry slopes along valleys and rivers, in the French and Swiss Jura Mountains, Portugal and into Northern Africa and as far east as Iran. Variants are also found in Lebanon.

Typical height:

6-12 metres

Typical width:

5-9 metres

Growth rate:

Slow growing

Typical form:

Forms a small and densely branched tree, with an oval to rounded form. Tending to a large shrub in less favourable sites.

Characteristics:

Leaves can be variable, but typically 3-5 cm long with three-blunt lobes, shiny dark green above, underside blue-green. Foliage typically thick, leathery (coriaceous), turning yellow in autumn. Branches are smooth (glabrous), reddish-brown to grey. Trunk and main branch bark grooved and corkier. Flowers are yellow-green and held in pendulous corymbs (flower cluster). Flowers appear simultaneously with new leaves. Fruit is a samara with many being



unfertilised (parthenocarpic). It is usually abundant and can have a reddish-tinge to the samaras giving an ornamental characteristic.

Site requirements:

Montpelier Maple adapts to most soil types but prefers calcareous soils (greater than 15% CaCO₃ in the soil which are relatively widespread in the drier areas of the earth). Intolerant of saline and sodic soils. Grows in full sun to part shade.

Tolerances:

Tolerant of dry conditions. Specimens in the Waite Arboretum in Adelaide indicates that *A. monspessulanum* is more drought tolerant than *A. campestre*, and this tree has survived Adelaide's dry climate without supplemental irrigation (after a two-year establishment period). Typically a vigorous, healthy tree with no serious pest or disease problems.

Suitable for use under powerlines:

Potentially with management

Notes:

Its compact form and drought tolerance makes Montpelier Maple well-suited for streets, small, gardens and urban landscapes. Like the Hedge Maple, it responds well to pruning and can be easily hedged to form a screen. It is popular among bonsai enthusiasts. It should be used more in the urban landscape due to its and high tolerance levels and its ability to be pruned quite hard. Due to its parthenocarpy nature, Montpelier Maple doesn't pose a significant weed hazard.