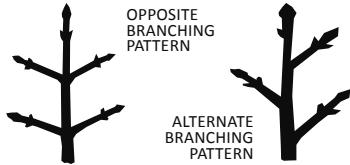


TREE OF THE MONTH

Striped Maple • *Acer pensylvanicum*

GOOSEFOOT MAPLE • MOOSE MAPLE • SNAKEBARK MAPLE • MOOSEWOOD

Striped maple has smooth bark with conspicuous, vertical white or dark slashes on a green ground. The opposite leaves are large with three lobes (prongs) resembling a goosefoot.



AN OLD NAME

Maple's genus name, Acer, is one of our oldest scientific botanical names. The word comes from the ancient Greek akastos (a European maple) or akarna (a laurel tree) or from the Latin acer meaning 'sharp.'

NEIGHBORHOOD

Striped maples are important understory trees in cool, moist forests. They are one of the most shade-tolerant deciduous trees and can germinate and grow in extreme shade for years. Because of the dim light they live in, growth rates can be extremely slow. Once a gap opens in the canopy, striped maples can grow rapidly to their mature height, but this rarely results in trees taller than forty feet.

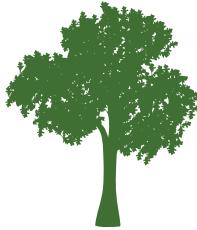
Striped maples like to grow alongside sugar and red maples, yellow birch, American beech, eastern hemlock, and northern white pine. Striped maple does not grow tall enough to become a canopy tree, so when the canopy eventually closes above a mature striped maple they flower and fruit prolifically.

CHANGING CHARACTER

Striped maples are dioecious (male and female plants) but the majority of them in any particular forest are male.

Like their forest neighbors Jack-in-the-pulpits (*Arisaema triphyllum*), however, striped maples can exhibit gender diphasy (plasticity). This means that if their habitat is especially good, for example a tree falls allowing more light to reach the understory, striped maples can then bear female flowers in a single season. These flowers bloom in spring as dangling racemes (clusters).





OCTOBER 2018

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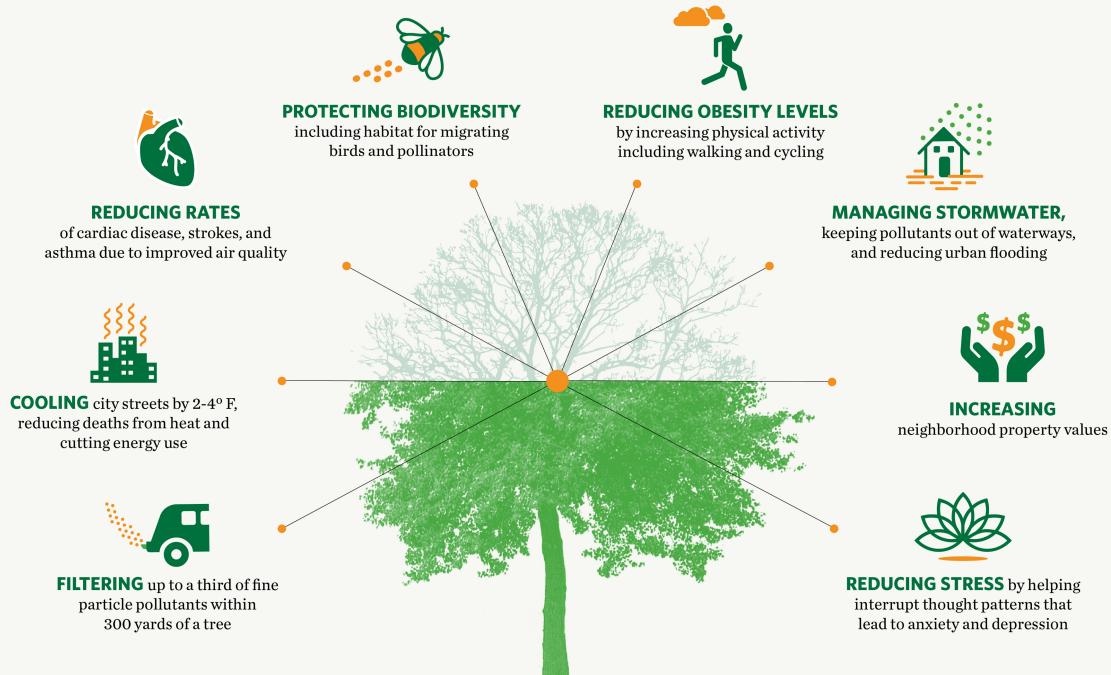
USEFUL TREE Striped maple wood has been used to make arrow shafts and bowls. The bark has been used by native American tribes as a decoction to treat respiratory issues. The bark is also sometimes used to make a beverage.

FOOD FOR ALL

Porcupines, rabbits, beaver, and deer use striped maples as food sources, browsing the twigs, bark, and leaves. Another common name, moosewood, refers to another common browser of striped maple leaves.

Benefits of Urban Trees

Research has linked the presence of urban trees to...



Tree of the Month is a collaboration between BEAT, the City of Pittsfield and Pittsfield Tree Watch. The Berkshire Environmental Action Team (BEAT) works to protect the environment for wildlife and in support of the natural systems that sustain us all. Find out more at thebeatnews.org.

