Butterfly Variegated Japanese Maple - New For 2026!

Acer palmatum 'Butterfly'

Height: 12 feet

Spread: 12 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 5

Description:

Stunning small deeply-toothed leaves are green with bold silver edges and hints of rose during summer; elegant vase shape habit; Japanese maples are the most coveted of all small landscape trees, having almost the perfect shape, habit, and fall color

Ornamental Features

Butterfly Variegated Japanese Maple is primarily valued in the landscape or garden for its ornamental upright and spreading habit of growth. It has attractive creamy white-variegated grayish green foliage with hints of rose. The serrated lobed palmate leaves are highly ornamental and turn outstanding shades of orange, scarlet and violet in the fall.

Landscape Attributes

Butterfly Variegated Japanese Maple is a dense deciduous tree with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance tree, and should only be pruned in summer after the leaves have fully developed, as it may 'bleed' sap if pruned in late winter or early spring. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Butterfly Variegated Japanese Maple is recommended for the following landscape applications;



Butterfly Variegated Japanese Maple foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Butterfly Variegated Japanese Maple in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Butterfly Variegated Japanese Maple will grow to be about 12 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 12 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 60 years or more.



Butterfly Variegated Japanese Maple in fall
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This tree does best in full sun to partial shade. You may want to keep it away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Butterfly Variegated Japanese Maple is a fine choice for the yard, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Its large size and upright habit of growth lend it for use as a solitary accent, or in a composition surrounded by smaller plants around the base and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.