Common Name: Southern Magnolia

Scientific Name: Magnolia grandiflora

Order: Magnoliales

Family: Magnoliaceae

Description
Southern magnolia is an evergreen tree that grows between 60 and 80 feet tall and has a canopy spread of 30 to 40 feet. The leaves are simple and have an oval shape. They grow alternate of each other on the limbs and are green in color. The leaves have no fall color change and are not very showy. The flowers have a very pleasant fragrance to them. They are spring and summer flowers. The flowers are very showy and are white in color. The fruit on a southern magnolia is brown or red and it may attract birds. The fruit, twigs, and foliage can cause a lot of litter on the ground. The bark is very thin and can be easily damaged. It will require pruning for vehicular and pedestrian clearance under the canopy of the tree.

Growth Habit
Southern magnolia is native to North America. It has an oval or pyramidal shape to its canopy. According to the USDA the growth rate for a southern magnolia is a medium rate. The uniformity of the crown is irregular outline or silhouette, and the texture is coarse.

Hardiness Zone(s)
The hardiness zones that southern magnolia plant grows in are 7a through zone 10.

Culture
Southern magnolia can grow in part sun/part shade, and they can also grow in full sunlight. If the soil is moist then southern magnolia will thrive in full sunlight. If regular irrigation cannot be provided plants that have been located in partial shade seem to grow a lot better. It can grow in all different kinds of soils like clay, loam, sand, slightly alkaline, acid, extended flooding, and well-drained. Southern magnolia prefers acid soil. The trees drought tolerance and aerosol salt tolerance are both moderate and the soil salt tolerance is good. There is very little pruning required to this plant. The root system spreads a lot wider than other trees. It extends from the trunk to about four times its canopy’s width.

Diseases & Insects
Scales come in many assorted shapes and sizes that can infest twigs and leaves. The most common scale is the magnolia scale which is about one half-inch-across. Horticulture oil can be used to control the overwintering scales. Although some trees many have heavy infestations they appear to go fine. When young tulip poplar weevil feeds as a leaf minor and when an adult it
chews holes in the leaves. Magnolia borer girdles the trunk just below the soil surface on young nursery stock. Control can be difficult but it is also attainable with the proper material. Magnolias rarely require chemical controls but they can be subject to leaf spots, blights, scabs and black mildews caused by a large number of fungi, or a bacterium. The disease called canker can kill branches. You can prune these branches out and keep the tree healthy by watering it in dry weather conditions and regular fertilization. Verticillium wilt can cause death to a few branches and rarely may kill the tree.

**Landscape Value**
Southern magnolia has many different uses in the world of landscaping. These uses include buffer strips around parking lots, strips in the median of highways, a shade tree, and a residential street tree. Southern magnolia can also be used as a very striking garden specimen. If the southern magnolia is being used as a wind-break or street tree the lower limbs have to be removed. Sometimes people object to the southern magnolia as a street tree because of the big falling leaves and the falling fruit. Since the southern magnolia has easy growth and carefree nature it is very ideal for low-maintenance landscape.

**References**
