



## Paperbark Maple, *Acer griseum*

Alex X. Niemiera, Professor, School of Plant and Environmental Sciences, Virginia Tech

### Summary

**Foliage:** About 4 to 5 inches long; trifoliate; deciduous

**Height:** About 25 feet

**Spread:** About 10 feet

**Shape:** Oval to round

### Main Features

Paperbark maple is a small tree with exceptionally beautiful peeling cinnamon-colored bark. Most branches, those that have a diameter about one-half inch and larger, will have peeling (exfoliating) orange-brown bark. The intensity and shade of the bark color and extent of the peeling character will vary from tree to tree. This species has a growth rate of about 12 inches or less per year and is considered a slow-growing species. In addition to its slow growth rate, paperbark maple propagation is relatively difficult; thus, this species is generally more costly than other maples. However, the ornamental value is certainly well worth the extra cost. Fall foliage color, ranging from mediocre to quite showy (reds and red-oranges), varies from year to year, from tree to tree, and from location to location. Paperbark maple is certainly worthy to be a specimen tree (sufficient attributes to be featured as a focal point). The bark feature is especially striking in snow.

### Plant Needs

**Zone:** 5 to 7

**Light:** Full sun to part shade

**Moisture:** Average to somewhat dry

**Soil type:** Average to somewhat poor

**pH range:** Acid to somewhat alkaline

### Functions

Paperbark maple is suitable wherever a small tree is needed. As mentioned, paperbark maple is certainly worthy to be a specimen tree.

### Care

Paperbark maple is relatively carefree.

### Additional Information

There are two clones affiliated with paperbark maple, 'Cinamon Flake' and Gingerbread™. These are actually hybrids resulting from *A. griseum* × *A. maximowiczianum* crosses. This author has not observed these in person and therefore offers no opinion on their worthiness.