Franklin Tree

Franklinia alatamaha



Franklin Tree flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 15 feet

Spread: 15 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 5b

Other Names: Franklinia Tree

Description:

An extremely rare small tree with an interesting history; large white flowers in mid-summer and incredible fall colors, makes a great accent plant; very particular about growing conditions, needs light, well-drained acidic soils and adequate moisture



Franklin Tree in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Franklin Tree features bold fragrant white cup-shaped flowers with yellow eyes held atop the branches from mid summer to early fall. It has dark green deciduous foliage. The narrow leaves turn an outstanding scarlet in the fall. The smooth gray bark adds an interesting dimension to the landscape.

Landscape Attributes

Franklin Tree is a 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 tree will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Disease

Franklin Tree is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent

Planting & Growing

Franklin Tree will grow to be about 15 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 15 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 medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more.

This tree should only be grown in full sunlight. It requires an evenly moist well-drained soil for optimal growth, but will die in standing water. It is very fussy about its soil conditions and must have rich, acidic soils to ensure success, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided, 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 species is native to parts of North America.



Franklin Tree in fall
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder