Grow a Greener Garden

Garden and Landscape Plant Finder

Aka Shigitatsu Sawa Japanese Maple

Acer palmatum 'Aka Shigitatsu Sawa'

Height: 8 feet

Spread: 8 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 5a

Other Names: Samurai



Aka Shigitatsu Sawa Japanese Maple foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Aka Shigitatsu Sawa Japanese Maple
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Description:

Unusual cream summer leaf with rich green veins on a compact plant, amazing fall color; Japanese maples are the most coveted of all small landscape trees, and with good reason - it has almost the perfect shape, habit, and fall colors

Ornamental Features

Aka Shigitatsu Sawa Japanese Maple is primarily valued in the landscape or garden for its ornamental globe-shaped form. It features dainty corymbs of red flowers hanging below the branches in mid spring. It has attractive creamy white foliage with green veins and tinges of rose. The small lobed palmate leaves are highly ornamental and turn outstanding shades of orange and red in the fall.

Landscape Attributes

Aka Shigitatsu Sawa Japanese Maple is a dense deciduous tree with a strong central leader and a more or less rounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

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.

Aka Shigitatsu Sawa Japanese Maple is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

Aka Shigitatsu Sawa Japanese Maple will grow to be about 8 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 8 feet. It tends to be a little leggy, 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 50 years or more.

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.



Aka Shigitatsu Sawa Japanese Maple foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Aka Shigitatsu Sawa Japanese Maple is a fine choice for the yard, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants 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.