



Celtis laevigata 'All Seasons' 'All Seasons' Sugarberry¹

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INTRODUCTION

This very large, broad, fast growing deciduous North American native tree has a rounded vase crown with spreading, pendulous branches (Fig. 1). This cultivar provides for a more uniform crown shape than the species and does not shed twigs as the species does. The medium-textured, light green leaves turn bright yellow in fall and can be showy in some years. Fall color is more reliable north of USDA hardiness zone 8b. Leaves have a longer, more slender tip than *Celtis occidentalis*. The grey-brown to silvery bark has some warty projections or corky ridges, making it attractive in wintertime but the trunk on most trees is smooth. Sugarberry commonly reaches 40 to 50 feet in height with a somewhat lesser spread, and makes a wonderful shade tree. It could be grown and used more in urban areas but, unfortunately, may compartmentalize injury poorly as the species does, resulting in branch and trunk rot.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Celtis laevigata* 'All Seasons'
Pronunciation: SELL-tiss lee-vih-GAY-tuh
Common name(s): 'All Seasons' Sugarberry, 'All Seasons' Sugar Hackberry
Family: *Ulmaceae*
USDA hardiness zones: 5B through 11 (Fig. 2)
Origin: native to North America
Uses: Bonsai; large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size); wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; reclamation plant; shade tree; specimen; residential street tree; tree

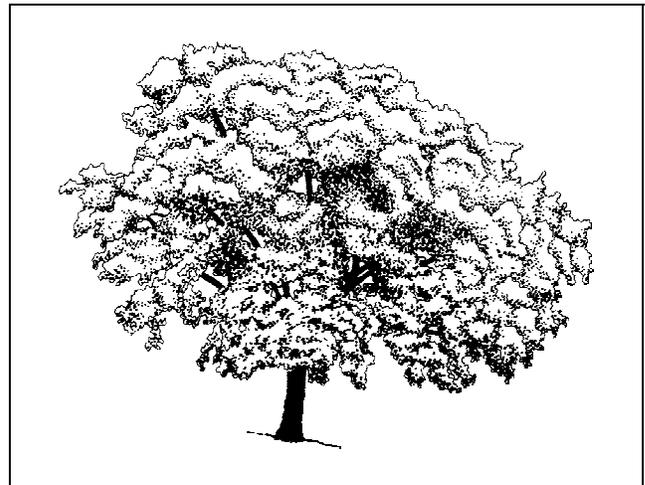


Figure 1. Mature 'All Seasons' Sugarberry.

has been successfully grown in urban areas where air pollution, poor drainage, compacted soil, and/or drought are common

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree

DESCRIPTION

Height: 40 to 60 feet
Spread: 35 to 55 feet
Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms
Crown shape: round; vase shape
Crown density: moderate
Growth rate: medium
Texture: medium

1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-139, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: November 1993.
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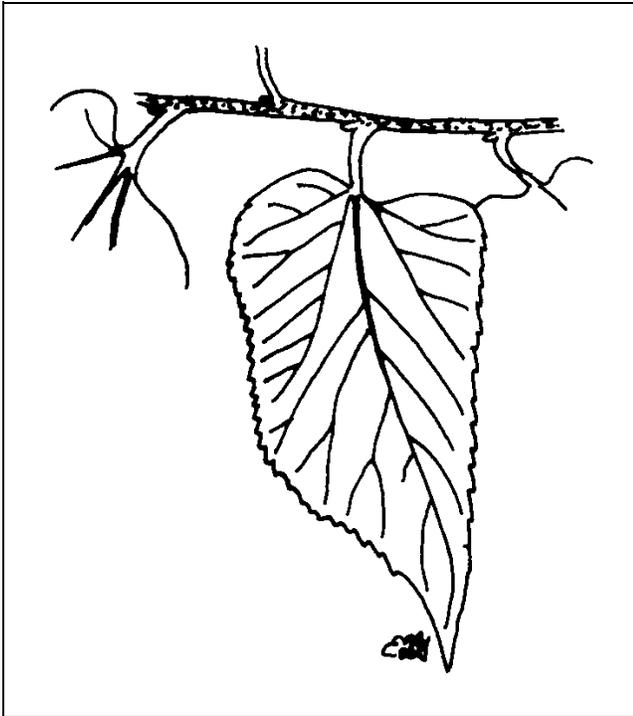


Figure 2. Foliage of 'All Seasons' Sugarberry.

Foliage

- Leaf arrangement:** alternate (Fig. 3)
- Leaf type:** simple
- Leaf margin:** serrate
- Leaf shape:** lanceolate; ovate
- Leaf venation:** bowed; banchidodrome; pinnate; reticulate
- Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous
- Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches
- Leaf color:** green
- Fall color:** yellow
- Fall characteristic:** showy

Flower

- Flower color:** green
- Flower characteristics:** inconspicuous and not showy; spring flowering

Fruit

- Fruit shape:** round
- Fruit length:** < .5 inch
- Fruit covering:** fleshy
- Fruit color:** black; red
- Fruit characteristics:** attracts birds; attracts squirrels and other mammals; inconspicuous and not showy; fruit, twigs, or foliage cause significant litter

Trunk and Branches

- Trunk/bark/branches:** bark is thin and easily damaged from mechanical impact; droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; showy trunk; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns
- Pruning requirement:** requires pruning to develop strong structure
- Breakage:** resistant
- Current year twig color:** brown; green
- Current year twig thickness:** thin

Culture

- Light requirement:** tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in full sun
- Soil tolerances:** clay; loam; sand; acidic; alkaline; extended flooding; well-drained
- Drought tolerance:** high
- Aerosol salt tolerance:** high
- Soil salt tolerance:** good

Other

- Roots:** surface roots can lift sidewalks or interfere with mowing
- Winter interest:** tree has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers
- Outstanding tree:** tree has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more
- Invasive potential:** seeds itself into the landscape
- Pest resistance:** no pests are normally seen on the tree

USE AND MANAGEMENT

The tiny, red to black, berry-like, sweet fruits attract many birds, and Sugarberry should be included in any natural landscape setting. It will grow rapidly and require regular pruning and training to develop a strong branch structure and to keep it looking neat in the nursery. Lack of popularity may be due to the open, awkward appearance of young trees of the species, but this cultivar is much more uniform in shape and the tree should be used more. Avoid injury to the trunk and existing trees will serve you for many years.

Sugarberry will grow in a variety of soil types but grows best in moist, fertile soils in a full sun location, though it will tolerate partial shade. It is sensitive to

highly alkaline soils. Chlorosis develops on alkaline soil, but witches broom and nipple gall are not a problem as they are on Common Hackberry. Sugarberry is moderately drought- and salt-tolerant once established and is very adaptable, growing in wet sites fairly well. Skilled pruning is required several times during the first 15 years of life to prevent formation of weak branch crotches and multiple trunks. But once this is accomplished, trees should grow with little care. Avoid pruning large-diameter branches at the trunk since the tree compartmentalizes decay poorly. A number of southern cities use Sugarberry as a street tree while others ban it. Give this cultivar a try in some of your urban and suburban plantings.

The wood is used in much the same way as elm in the lumber industry for plywood, furniture and veneer.

In the North and Midwest, the native *Celtis occidentalis* is used in place of *Celtis laevigata*. Somewhat similar in overall appearance, it is a smaller tree with a more warty bark and smaller, sandpapery leaves than *Celtis laevigata*.

Propagation of the species is by seed. The cultivar is cutting propagated.

Pests

The most common insect on Hackberry causes the Hackberry nipple gall, but this is not much of a problem on this tree. A pouch or gall forms on the lower leaf surface in response to feeding.

Scales of various types may be found on Hackberry. These may be controlled with horticultural oil sprays.

Diseases

Trunk rot and leaf spots.

Several fungi cause leaf spots on Hackberry. The disease is worse during wet weather but chemical controls are seldom needed.

Generally resistant to witches broom. Witches broom is caused by a mite and powdery mildew. The main symptom is clusters of abnormally short twigs which are scattered throughout the tree crown. Prune out the clusters of twigs when practical.

Powdery mildew may coat the leaves with white powder. The leaves may be uniformly coated or only in patches.

Sugarberry is a favorite host for mistletoe.