

## Tier 2:

### *Acer palmatum*, Japanese Maple

Japanese maple is one of the most popular ornamental trees due to its extremely attractive foliage. It seems to have a relative low rate of escape from cultivation, though numerous seedlings have been found near yards where there is more than one Japanese Maple. Though pretty, this is an invasive plant that can take the place of native maples in our forest, providing little in the way of ecological value to native insects and animals.

**Population Status:** Confirmed- Saratoga Co.

**Description:** With a wide variety of cultivars, this plant can have a wide variety of leaf shapes, though these are typically palmately lobed with an odd number of acutely pointed lobes. The fruit, like other species of maple, is a pair of winged samaras. (helicopter-like seeds that disperse by wind) It is noted that this tree has genetic variation that can be easily seen even in a single generation. Many seedlings display traits that the parent tree does not show. In our forests, seedlings from red ornamental trees often show up as small, innocuous green seedlings.

**Control:** Small seedlings and saplings can be pulled.

**Look-alikes:** This species most looks like Sugar Maple (native) one of the most populous trees in our forests. The lobes of Japanese Maple are much pointier than the more rounded Sugar Maples.

**Flower time and Description:** Japanese maple have small reddish flowers that bloom between May-June. They are pollinated by insects.

