



# Southern magnolia

*Magnolia grandiflora* L.

The southern magnolia is a beautiful medium-sized evergreen tree, with large white flowers. It is native to the southeastern United States. The flowers are followed by huge red (when ripe) cone-like seed pods, with bright red seeds. The seeds typically ripen after other native magnolias. The leaves are dark green and very shiny. This tree prefers moderate temperatures and rich soils that do not dry out but is surprisingly tolerant despite that. Hardy through zone 6. Plants with dense brown hairs on the undersides of the leaves are supposed to be more hardy than those without. Trees in the deep south can grow quite large, over 100 feet tall and with a trunk more than five feet in diameter.

## **Propagation**

Southern magnolia seed is relatively easy to grow, given a rich, moist soil. No cold stratification is required. It can either be direct-sowed outdoors or sown indoors. Before planting, make sure to strip off all the outer pulp; it's recommended that you then wash the seed in a mild dish-soap bath before planting. Any pulp remaining on the seed will inhibit germination. Shipping in the pulp protects the seed; any mold on the pulp is not harmful and will wash away. Once planted, do not allow seeds or seedlings to dry out. Protect from extreme cold temperatures. However, germination may be very slow. Seed planted this fall may not sprout until the end of next summer, so be patient. As with all magnolias, percentage of viability may be relatively low.

**Conservation Seed**  
**PO Box 1196, Athens, OH 45701**  
**[knousejohn@gmail.com](mailto:knousejohn@gmail.com)**