



Fraser Magnolia

Magnolia fraseri

Walter

The Fraser magnolia grows in nine states of the southeast United States in the Appalachian, Blue Ridge, and Cumberland Mountains. It greatly resembles the bigleaf magnolia, *Magnolia macrophylla*, but the leaves are never larger than about half the length. It is also sometimes called mountain magnolia because it forms large forest groves in the Appalachian mountains. The wood is sometimes marketed as “yellow poplar,” as it is very similar.

The flowers of the Fraser magnolia are fragrant, and can be large, up to about ten inches across. The ripening seed cones turn a bright magenta-red. The leaves are smaller than those of the bigleaf magnolia, reaching only about two feet long, more similar in size to those of the umbrella magnolia, *Magnolia tripetala*. This tree can grow to 50 feet tall.

All these magnolias, plus the pyramid magnolia, *Magnolia pyramidata* and the Ashe magnolia, *Magnolia ashei*, are the American representatives subgenus *Magnolia*, section *Rhytidospermum*. There are also six Asian species in this section.

The Fraser magnolia appreciates a well-drained, humus-rich soil and is quite shade tolerant. Of course, it makes a much better specimen tree in full sun, as well as having more blooms. It may need watering in dry times.

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