



Sweetbay magnolia

Magnolia virginiana L.

The sweetbay magnolia is a beautiful large shrub or small tree, with large white flowers. It is native to the southeastern United States. The flowers are followed by typical magnolia seed pods, with orange-red seeds. The sweetbay is subevergreen, with dark green, shiny, somewhat leathery foliage. This tree prefers moderate temperatures and rich soils that do not dry out but is amazingly tolerant despite that. Hardy to southern zone 5.

Propagation

Sweetbay 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
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