



Black gum

Nyssa sylvatica Marsh.

The black gum is also known as tupelo or pepperidge. It is a medium to large shade tree, sometimes with alligator-patterned bark. It has excellent fall color that can range from red to mauve. The fruit is a dark blue to black berry in fall. The tree is pyramidal when young, developing a somewhat flat-topped crown with age. It has the peculiar property of being able to grow both in swamps and high on ridges. Honey made from the flowers of this tree is some of the most prized honey available. This is an excellent yard tree. Hardy to zone 4.

Propagation

Black gum seed needs two to three months of cold stratification, at 41 degrees or below. The seed can be direct-sown outdoors or in pots. No other special treatment is necessary. Give first year seedlings partial shade.

Conservation Seed
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