TREES OF BC

Bigleaf maple

Vine maple

Douglas maple







Leaves

Leaves are deeply five-lobed and are the largest of any maple in Canada, measuring 15 to 30 centimetres across. They have only a few bluntish, wavy teeth; are shiny, dark green on top and paler underneath; and turn yellow in the fall. The leaf stalk sometimes oozes a milky substance when it is broken. Twigs and leaves emerge as pairs.

Flowers and Fruit

Small greenish-yellow flowers, about 3 millimetres across, appear early in spring, hanging in clusters at the ends of twigs. The fruit consists of two winged seeds joined at the base. Seeds are hairy, 3 to 6 centimetres long.

Habitat

Bigleaf maple generally grows on coarse, gravelly, moist soils such as those found near river, lake or stream edges, but it can occur on other moist soils such as seepage areas. It commonly occurs in mixed groups of trees with Red alder, Black cottonwood, Douglas-fir, Western redcedar, and Western hemlock.

Bark

Thin and greenish, becoming reddish-brown; smooth, or sometimes with shallow cracks.

Leaves

Leaves are almost circular, 6 to 11 centimetres in diameter, with 7 to 9 lobes; the lobes are triangular, with sharp single or double teeth; bright yellowishgreen on top, pale green and downy underneath, turning red or yellow in autumn.

Flowers and Fruit

The fruit consists of winged seeds, 2 to 4 centimetres long, joined in pairs and borne in a cluster; the wings of the seeds are spread widely.

Habita

Vine maple occurs most frequently on moist soils, rich in nitrogen, particularly along the banks of streams and wet sites. It can live in the shade, but also occurs in openings in the forest. Vine maple and Alder are often the first trees to establish after landslides. Vine maple commonly occurs with Bigleaf maple, Douglas-fir, Western hemlock, Grand fir, Pacific dogwood, and Sword fern underneath.

Bark

Generally thin, smooth, and dark reddish-brown; roughened on larger branches and old trunks.

Leaves

Leaves are 7 to 10 centimetres wide, divided into 3 to 5 lobes and have a typical maple-leaf shape. They are coarsely toothed, dark green on top and greyish-green underneath, turning bright redorange in autumn.

Flowers and Fruit

The fruit consists of a cluster of winged seeds, joined in pairs at a sharp angle in a V-shape. The seed wings are about 2.5 centimetres long, and the seeds are strongly wrinkled and indented.

Habitat

Douglas maple occurs on well-drained wet sites and sometimes in avalanche areas. It inhabits clearings and open forests.







