

Common Apple



Common Apple (*Malus pumila*)

General Description

Native to southeast Europe and has genetically contributed to the many cultivated fruiting apples for orchard production. Most cultivated apples are hybrids of *M. pumila* and are distinguished primarily by their fruit characteristics.

Leaves and Buds

Bud Arrangement - Alternate.

Bud Color - Reddish-brown, with several imbricate scales.

Bud Size - 1/8 to 1/4 inch long.

Leaf Type and Shape - Simple, elliptical-ovate to oval.

Leaf Margins - Finely-serrate to irregularly toothed or lobed.

Leaf Surface - Pubescent, later glabrate above.

Leaf Length - 1 to 3/4 inches.

Leaf Width - 1 to 2 1/2 inches.

Leaf Color - Dark or olive-green above, paler green beneath; yellow fall color.

Flowers and Fruits

Flower Type - Umbel or corymb-like racemes.

Flower Color - White, sometimes with pink tint.

Fruit Type - A pome with persistent or deciduous calyx. If fruit is larger than 2 inches across it is commonly classified as an apple.

Fruit Color - Range from red to yellow to green.

Form

Growth Habit - Rounded crown, decurrent branching.

Texture - Medium, summer; medium, winter.

Crown Height - 15 to 25 feet.

Crown Width - 10 to 25 feet.

Bark Color - Reddish-brown.

Root System - Fibrous, spreading to more than tree height.

Environmental Requirements

Soils

Soil Texture - Adapted to a variety of soils, prefers a heavy loam soil.

Soil pH - 5.0 to 7.5, prefers slightly acidic soils.

Windbreak Suitability Group - 1, 3, 4, 4C, 5.

Cold Hardiness

USDA Zone 3.

Water

Need well-drained, moist soils.

Light

Full sun.

Uses

Conservation/Windbreaks

Small tree on protected side of farmstead windbreaks.

Wildlife

Fruit eaten by a variety of birds and mammals. Branches browsed by mammals. Rodents and rabbits can destroy trees by girdling stem or trunk.

Agroforestry Products

Wood - Desirable for smokehouse kindling. Excellent quality firewood.

Food - Fruit used fresh, dried, and processed.

Medicinal - Used for liver problems, gout, indigestion, dysentery and diarrhea. Source of phloretin, an antibiotic.

Urban/Recreational

Fruit can be objectionable and messy in most urban and recreational plantings.

Cultivated Varieties

Malus x 'Dakota Gold', 'Hazen', 'Mandan', 'Northern Lights', and 'Wodarz' - Releases from NDSU, Fargo, North Dakota.

Malus x 'Chestnut', 'Haralred', 'Haralson', 'Honeygold' and 'Sweet Sixteen' - Releases from University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Malus x 'Goodland', 'Luke', 'Mantet' and 'Norland' - Releases from Morden Research Station, Morden, Manitoba.

Related Species

Flowering Crabapples (*Malus* species/hybrids)

Ussurian Pear (*Pyrus ussuriensis*) and cultivars

Pests

Diseases include fireblight, apple scab, frog-eye leaf spot (black rot). Insect pests include cankerworms, fall webworm and apple maggot. Cultivars have variable resistance to many of these pests. Extracts of fruits have been used as an attractant to trap insect pests.