



Fast Facts!

Sweet Bay Magnolia

Magnolia virginiana

By the Butterfly Soak Bed

- Host plant for the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly, Virginia’s state insect. Foliage and twigs are eaten by white-tailed deer in winter but it is moderately deer resistant. Seeds are eaten by birds and small mammals.
- Also called laurel, swamp, swamp bay, or white bay magnolia; or beaver tree. Early settlers used its roots as bait in beaver traps.
- Native to the southeastern United States, north along the Atlantic coast to New York.
- Grows up to a bushy 35 feet in our area, up to 70 feet in the deep south.
- Likes full sun to part shade. No serious insect or disease problems.
- Will grow in wet soils such as those found in low spots or near ponds and streams. Also tolerates clay soil and air pollution.
- Flowers in June with lemon fragrance. A cutting in a vase releases its lemony fragrance and makes a show by dropping its carpels to expose the central stamen.
- Has cones with red berry clusters in the fall. Retains its leaves in winter in Virginia.
- Smaller than the Magnolia Grandiflora “southern magnolia.”
- Visit www.plantnovanatives.org about this and other native trees.