



Magnolia kobus Kobus Magnolia¹

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INTRODUCTION

A striking tree in summer or winter (Fig. 1). Dropping its large, six-inch leaves in fall without any spectacular display of color, Kobus Magnolia forms an attractive winter specimen with its rounded silhouette and multiple trunks originating close to the ground. Supposedly grows 30 to 40 feet tall but is most often 25 feet or less in an open, sunny landscape site and is capable of reaching 75 feet in height in its native forest habitat. In an open site, spread is often greater than height with 25-foot-tall trees 35 feet wide if given the room to grow unobstructed. Branches gracefully touch the ground on older specimens as the tree spreads, in a manner not unlike open-grown Live Oaks. Allow plenty of room for proper development.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Magnolia kobus*

Pronunciation: mag-NO-lee-uh KOE-bus

Common name(s): Kobus Magnolia, Northern Japanese Magnolia

Family: *Magnoliaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 5 through 8A (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: container or above-ground planter; specimen; no proven urban tolerance

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree

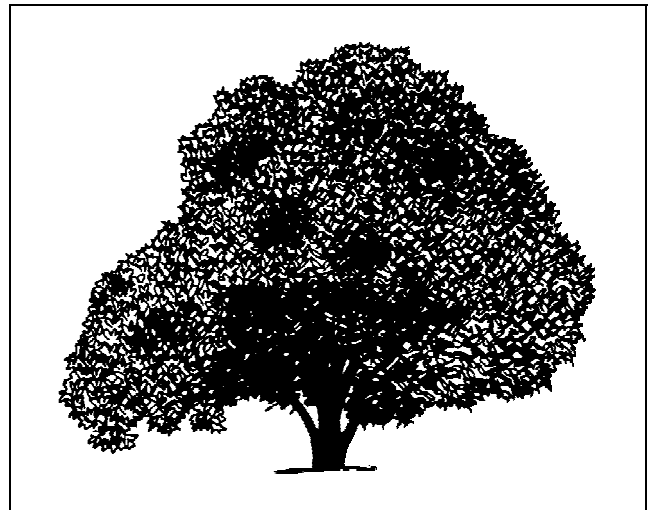


Figure 1. Mature Kobus Magnolia.

DESCRIPTION

Height: 25 to 30 feet

Spread: 25 to 35 feet

Crown uniformity: irregular outline or silhouette

Crown shape: round; spreading

Crown density: dense

Growth rate: slow

Texture: coarse

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire; undulate

Leaf shape: elliptic (oval); obovate

Leaf venation: banchidodrome; pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

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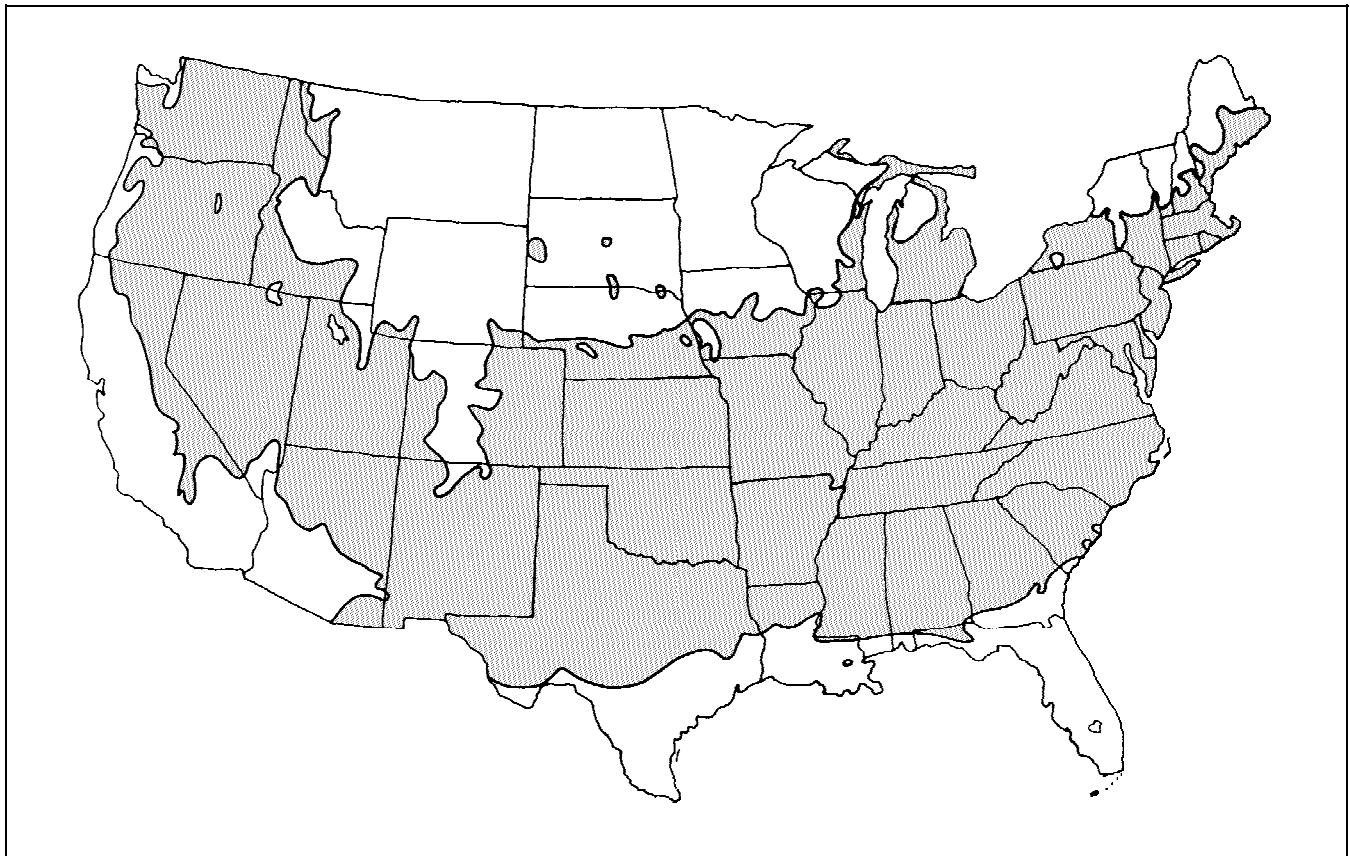


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: yellow

Fall characteristic: showy

Flower

Flower color: pink; white

Flower characteristics: pleasant fragrance; spring flowering; very showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: elongated; irregular

Fruit length: 1 to 3 inches

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: pink; red

Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; no significant litter problem; showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: bark is thin and easily damaged from mechanical impact; droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; routinely

grown with, or trainable to be grown with, multiple trunks; not particularly showy; no thorns

Pruning requirement: needs little pruning to develop a strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: brown; green

Current year twig thickness: medium; thick

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in full sun

Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; slightly alkaline; acidic; well-drained

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: low

Soil salt tolerance: poor

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: tree has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

Outstanding tree: tree has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

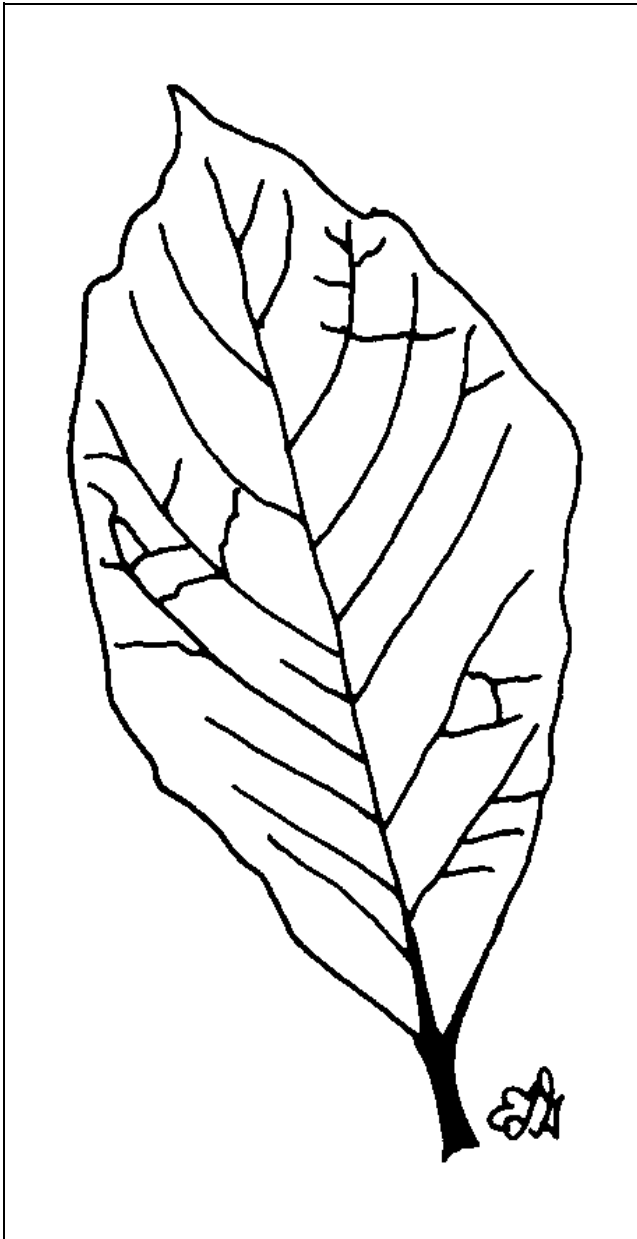


Figure 3. Foliage of Kobus Magnolia.

Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time

Ozone sensitivity: tolerant

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: susceptible

Pest resistance: no pests are normally seen on the tree

USE AND MANAGEMENT

The lightly-fragrant blooms which appear in spring before the new leaves unfold are ivory-colored to pale pink and four inches in diameter. Young trees flower poorly. The pink fruits which develop split open to reveal bright red seeds, which sway from slender threads before dropping to the ground.

Kobus Magnolia should be grown in full sun or partial shade on any well-drained soil. Probably not for poorly-drained areas but supposedly tolerant of soil with an alkaline pH.

The cultivar 'Wada's Memory' has black-green leaves, large, six-inch blooms and an upright or columnar growth habit (at least in youth). It will be available at selected nurseries.

Propagation is easily done by cuttings.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern but occasionally bothered by scale as are other Magnolias.