

Scientific Name: *Nyssa sylvatica*

Common Name: Black Tupelo, also known as Sour Gum or Black Gum

Environmental Conditions:

Hardiness Zone: 5a

Soil Moisture:

VERY WET			VERY DRY								
occasionally saturated or very wet soil			consistently moist, well drained soil			occasional periods of dry soil			prolonged periods of dry soil		
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	

Sun/Shade: full sun

Salt: some observed tolerance

pH: ≤ 7.5

Insect/Disease Factors: none serious or limiting

Growth Characteristics:

Height: 30' - 60' (although rare, can grow to 100'+)

Width: 20' - 40'

Form/Habit: pyramidal when young, dense, horizontal branching, sometimes pendulous lower branches, varies with age between two distinct forms, either an irregular-rounded and often flat-topped form or an oval to pyramidal form

Rate: slow to medium

Ornamental Characteristics:

Flower: not ornamentally important

Fruit: not ornamentally important, fairly inconspicuous, 1/2" long blue-black drupes in pairs or clusters, eaten by birds and mammals

Seasonal Foliage Color: glossy green in summer, great variability in fall (yellow/orange/red/purple tones), typically excellent fall color

Bark: color variable, dark gray to brown, often silvery or almost black, texture variable, at times irregular ridges broken into short segments, other times almost scaly

Transplant Issues: difficult to transplant, use small caliper B&B only, slow to recover from transplanting

Management Issues: fruits (found on older trees) can stain sidewalk and may cause litter problem

Suggested Uses: narrow or wide street tree lawns/pits, parks

Cultivars: strongly weeping form 'Autumn Cascades' is available but not suitable for street tree use

