

Magnolias and their Relatives

The genus *Magnolia* has over 80 species of trees and shrubs distributed in eastern North America, Mexico, and Asia. These plants are some of the most popular ornamental species because of their unsurpassed beauty when in full bloom. Magnolias are known to be among the most ancient flowering plants from fossil remains dating back more than one hundred million years. From that time to now, the flowering structures of these plants have remained relatively unchanged.



Magnolia x veitchii

Magnolias have been cultivated since 600 A.D. in Asia, but the first one arrived in a European garden in 1688. Many cultivars have been bred or selected since then to provide a wider range of colors, forms, and flowering times. The name of the genus commemorates Pierre Magnol (1638-1715), an early director of the botanic garden in Montpellier, France.

Botanic characteristics link several other genera native to similar regions of the world to the Magnolias. Tulip trees (*Liriodendron*) are deciduous trees often used as street trees. Newly recognized genera from China include many evergreen flowering relatives such as *Manglietia*, *Michelia*, and *Parakmeria*. A number of their species are endangered in China and nurseries are working to grow and preserve them, thus making plants newly available to the public.

Magnolia Facts

Asian species generally bloom before their leaves unfold from the buds. At Hoyt Arboretum these trees are usually in flower in early April.

American species flower during the summer months with some repeat blooming until late fall.

Magnolias are pollinated by beetles.

Tulip trees can be *M. soulangiana*, *Liriodendron* or Yulan magnolia.

Other places to see Magnolias

Bishops Close: At the end of Military Lane in Lake Oswego; former Kerr Estate.

Crystal Springs Rhodendron Garden: SE 28th Ave, Portland, OR

Hendricks Park: Located in Eugene, OR



Hoyt Arboretum is Portland's global garden in the wild where we grow and exhibit trees and plants from around the world, while educating our community and helping to conserve vitally important plant bio-diversity.

Magnolia Walk

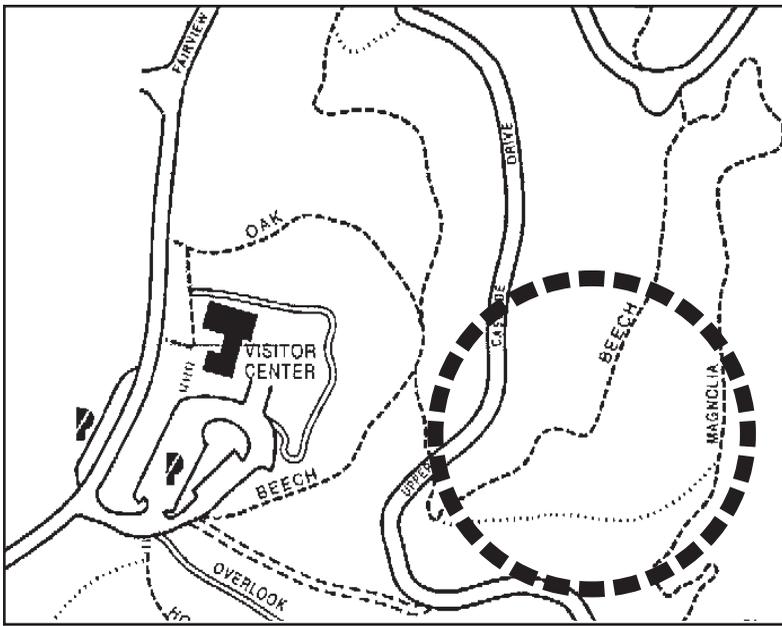


at Hoyt Arboretum

"Aristocrats of ancient lineage, possessed of many superlative qualities are the magnolias. They have the largest flowers and the largest individual leaves of any hardy group of trees... their free-flowering character and great beauty of blossom are equalled by the ease with which they may be cultivated."

E. H. "Chinese" Wilson

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Magnolia x soulangiana
Saucer magnolia

This best known group of Magnolia hybrids was originally bred by a soldier turned horticulturist, Soulange-Bodin, after the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. the cross of *M. denudata* and *M. liliflora* brought pinks and purples into the larger goblet shape of the Yulan flower.

Magnolia denudata
Yulan magnolia

Fragrant pure white flowers in early spring are the attraction on this species native to eastern china. In 600 AD. Buddhist monks collected the Lily Tree to plant in their temple gardens. Chinese artists depicted the Yulan flowers in many of their paintings, on porcelain, in carvings, and embroideries.



Magnolia grandiflora
Southern magnolia

The Southern magnolia is a more widely cultivated than any other evergreen ornamental tree, being relatively wind, heat, pollution and drought tolerant. Its ability due to the rusty indumentum on the undersurface of the leaves. The large, fragrant creamy-white flowers bloom in the summer months.



Magnolia 'Elizabeth'

Developed from a cross between the Chinese *M. denudata* and the American *M. acuminata*, the yellow flowers appear in late spring. This cultivar is becoming more common due to its propagation through tissue culture techniques.

Magnolia macrophyllum
Bigleaf cucumber tree

Resembling the leaves of a banana, this Magnolia has the largest leaves of any measuring up to three feet in length and almost one foot wide. Its summer flowers are proportionately larger, growing up to one foot in diameter.



Magnolia sieboldii
Oyamana magnolia

Delightful fragrances from pure white flowers with maroon centers blooming in May separate *M. sieboldii* and its close relatives, *M. wilsonii* and *M. watsonii* from other earlier or later flowering Magnolia species. The differences between these species is the orientation of the flower. *M. sieboldii* faces horizontal to the ground, *M. wilsonii* hangs downward, and *M. watsonii* faces upward.

Manglietia insignis

Endangered in China, efforts are being made to grow this beautiful Red Lotus tree in other places of the world to preserve it. Its flower shape along with that of several other genera, including the Michelia and Parakmeria specimens growing in the Arboretum, are similar to characteristics of Magnolia and classified in the same plant family.

Magnolia sprengeri

This is an example of a true tree within the Magnolia genus, growing to 50 feet tall. It is native to the woods of central China at higher elevations. The darker, reddish purple flowers show up well high in its native forest canopy in midspring.

Magnolia stellata
Star magnolia



Planted in 1935, this old specimen shows the characteristic dense twiggy appearance of Star magnolia.

It begins showing star-like white flowers in March before its leaves unfurl. During the winter, leaf and flower buds are covered with wooly coats.

Magnolia virginiana
Sweet bay magnolia

Suitable for swampy areas, the eastern species was the first Magnolia to be planted in a European garden in 1688. It has a wide native range from Florida and Texas to Nova Scotia. Fragrant, creamy flowers appear in the summer.

