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# *Platanus x acerifolia* 'Columbia' and 'Liberty'



The U.S. National Arboretum presents the handsome 'Columbia' and 'Liberty' planetrees, trees with structural character! Wonderful exfoliating bark in shades of greys and greens adds year-round interest. These large, tough shade trees were hybridized and selected for their resistance to the fungal disease sycamore anthracnose. Plant 'Columbia' and 'Liberty' for their tolerance to demanding sites, then take a snooze in their shade on a summer day.



'Columbia'



'Liberty'



'Liberty'

**U.S. National Arboretum Plant Introduction**  
**Floral and Nursery Plants Research Unit**

U.S. National Arboretum, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, 3501 New York Ave., N.E., Washington, DC 20002





## 'Columbia' and 'Liberty' Planetree

<b>Botanical Name:</b>	<i>Platanus x acerifolia</i> (Air.) Willd. 'Columbia' (NA 36539; PI 479707) <i>Platanus x acerifolia</i> (Air.) Willd. 'Liberty' (NA 36537; PI 479708)
<b>Family:</b>	Platanaceae
<b>Hardiness:</b>	U.S.D.A. Zones 5–8(9)
<b>Development:</b>	Wide variation in susceptibility to sycamore anthracnose occurs in the London plane ( <i>Platanus x acerifolia</i> ), a natural hybrid that has been widely cultivated since the late 1600's across Western Europe and in more recent times in the United States. In 1968 and 1970, Frank S. Santamour, Jr., recreated this hybrid, crossing a symptomless <i>P. orientalis</i> of Turkish origin with two susceptible American sycamores ( <i>P. occidentalis</i> ). Progeny from these crosses were evaluated following several years of anthracnose infection in the field. Four clones that remained symptom free were further evaluated for growth and landscape attributes in field and street plantings for 12 years. Two selections, 'Columbia' and 'Liberty', were released August, 1984.
<b>Significance:</b>	'Columbia' and 'Liberty' are the first planetree cultivars resulting from controlled crossing of the American sycamore ( <i>P. occidentalis</i> ) and the Oriental planetree ( <i>P. orientalis</i> ). They are highly resistant to sycamore anthracnose caused by <i>Apiognomonina veneta</i> Hohn. (= <i>Gnomonia platanii</i> ). They also are strong compartmentalizers—able to resist the inward spread of wood decay caused by trunk wounds.
<b>Description:</b>	<b>Height:</b> May grow to 50 feet in 25 years; 26–30 feet in height at 12 years with a trunk diameter of 4–5 inches. <b>Habit:</b> Erect, single-trunked, large deciduous trees. 'Liberty' displays a pyramidal shape when young. <b>Foliage:</b> Medium to dark green leaves; 6–7 inches long, 8–10 inches wide. Leaves of 'Columbia' distinctly 5-lobed; leaves of 'Liberty' remotely 5-lobed. <b>Bark:</b> Handsome exfoliating bark; yellow-green fresh bark in summer turns to greyed-green after one year. Greyed-orange bark on young trees. Highly ornamental in winter. <b>Fruit:</b> Persistent, globose fruit, a syncarp of achenes, about 1 inches; sessile on a stalk. Fruit balls of 'Columbia' generally produced in 2's and 3's; 'Liberty' fruits produced singly or in 2's.
<b>Culture:</b>	Adaptable and tolerant of most soil and moisture conditions, including compacted or high pH soils. Prefer deep, moist, rich soils and full sun.
<b>Propagation:</b>	Root easily from hardwood cuttings or softwood cuttings under mist, using IBA, in approximately 6 weeks.
<b>Landscape Use:</b>	Specimen or shade tree in parks, commercial sites, golf courses, and campus-type settings where both large form and bark character can be appreciated and accommodated.
<b>Availability:</b>	Readily available from wholesale nurseries.

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