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*Acer tataricum*

[Synonyms : *Acer tartaricum*, *Acer tataricum* subsp. *aidzuense*]

**TATAR MAPLE** is a deciduous shrub or tree. Native to south-eastern Europe, and western Asia it has small greenish-white flowers and leaves that turn red and yellow in Autumn. It is also known as *Javor tatarský* (Czech), *Javor tatársky* (Slav), *Rysklönn* (Swedish), Tartarian maple, Tartar maple, *Tataarivaahtera* (Finnish), Tatarian maple, and *Tatarischer Steppenahorn* (German).

*Tataricum* means ‘of or from central Asia, Tartary (the land of the Tatars in Russia and Siberia), or the Crimea’.

It is believed to have been introduced to Britain in 1759.

Like that in bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*) and other close relatives, although the sap contains less sugar than some, it is still considered to be worth tapping in the early Spring, particularly from the trunks of more northern trees that experience cold winters with the warmer summers of more southern areas. It is sometimes made into a soft drink and it is also concentrated to a syrup used to sweeten many foods.

As with other close relatives, the leaves were thought to have some preservative qualities and were wrapped around apples (*Malus*) and some root crops before storage.

Tatar maple has been cultivated as an ornamental and has been grown as hedging and as a windbreak.