

Snakebark maple - *Acer davidii*, *Acer pennsylvanicum*

General information: The snakebark maples are named for their white striped bark which becomes rough and cracked with age. *Acer davidii*, Pere David's maple, is a Chinese maple which has seen successful use in bonsai. It is a good tree for high elevations, as it will grow at up to 3000 ft. *Acer pennsylvanicum* is the only snakebark maple native to the US. It is easily located on the east coast, but rarely found on the other side of the Alleghenies.

Lighting: Full sun, slight shade in summer.

Temperature: No temperature information was available.

Watering: Moderate during growth, sparingly in winter.

Feeding: Every two weeks in summer.

Pruning and wiring: Prune as needed during growth. Leaf pruning in midsummer is useful for leaf reduction. Generally used for larger sized bonsai, and does not work well as a broom. Suitable for all other styles.

Propagation: Cuttings, air-layering, or seeds after cold pre-treatment.

Repotting: Every 2-3 years in spring, before bur burst. Use basic bonsai soil. Does not like high pH.

Some species suitable for bonsai:

- *Acer davidii*: snakebark maple, Pere David's maple - Heart-shaped leaves on red stalks which turn lovely yellow to orange in the fall. A small tree, it grows to about 15m.
- *Acer davidii* 'Ernest Wilson'
- *Acer davidii* 'George Forrest' - a fast growing cultivar.
- *Acer pennsylvanicum*: striped maple, snakebark maple

Bibliography:

Tomlinson's "Complete Book of Bonsai"

Species information from Mitchell's "American Nature Guides: Trees",

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