

Flowering Maple - *Abutilon sp.*

General Information: Mostly used as an indoor houseplant, the flowering maple is a good alternative for those in climates too hot to grow maples. They are somewhat woody, with two to three inch leaves which are quite similar to maple leaves. So far, rarely used as bonsai, but they are readily available and have 2 inch bell-shaped flowers which bloom year-round to recommend them.

Lighting: Flowering maples enjoy the sun - give them at least four hours of direct sunlight daily.

Temperature: A warm weather plant which can be easily grown indoors. It prefers daytime temperatures of 60-72F, but prefers cool nights of 50-55F.

Watering: Flowering maples like moist conditions as houseplants.

Feeding: Once monthly, with indoor plant food.

Pruning and wiring: Shape is usually maintained through pruning, however wiring should work as long as care was taken to protect the branches.

Propagation: Through seeds, cuttings in spring.

Repotting: These plants do fine in ordinary potting soil.

Pests and diseases: Spider mites, white flies, aphids.

Some species suitable for bonsai:

- *Abutilon megapotamicum* 'Variegatum' - This plant, with its red and yellow blossoms, tends to become a trailing plant as it ages, and is probably only suited to cascade bonsai.
- *Abutilon pictum* - a bushy variety, which has many cultivars grown for their colorful flowers. Two of the most popular are 'Tangerine Dream' and 'Thompsonii'.

Compiled by Sabrina Caine