

## WACD PLANT MATERIALS CENTER

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### Big Leaf Maple (*Acer macrophyllum*)

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#### Distribution

Big Leaf Maple is generally found growing west of the Cascades in Washington at elevations from sea level to 1,500 feet.

#### Growth Habit

It is a large deciduous tree, growing to over 80 feet tall, with a crown that can spread over 60 feet in diameter. Often a multi-stemmed tree with young green bark and older grey-brown bark. Large, green, five lobed leaves decorate the tree in spring and summer turning orange and yellow in the fall.

#### Adaptability

Big Leaf Maple can be found growing in a wide range of sites that range from wet to dry and sunny to shady. It grows best in full sun on wet, bottom-lands, or on steep, rocky slopes.

#### Comments

- Big Leaf Maple has many uses as a conservation species. It is favored as a riparian restoration tree due to its adaptability, vigor and growth rate, and size and stature.
- It quickly grows above weed competition and provides shade for streams.
- Once established on a site, it provides diverse wildlife habitat, including forage for deer and elk, nesting for birds, and its seeds are used as food by many species of birds and animals.
- A mature specimen provides considerable leaf litter for the soil, and is therefore considered a 'soil-building' species.
- It also has commercial value. Its wood is used in furniture and cabinet building, veneer, musical instruments and fuel.

