

Red Maple

(*Acer rubrum* — includes cultivars like ‘October Glory,’ ‘Autumn Blaze’ hybrid, ‘Red Sunset’)

Red Maple is known for its beautiful red fall color and attractive rounded crown. In Colorado, **true Red Maples struggle** due to alkaline soils, drought, and intense heat. Hybrids like **Autumn Blaze (A. rubrum × A. saccharinum)** perform better but still face chlorosis, scorch, borers, and leaf diseases.



Seasonal Pest & Disease Calendar

Icons: 🌸 Spring | ☀️ Summer | 🍂 Fall | ❄️ Winter

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Active Season</u>	<u>Icons</u>
Aphids	Insect	Spring–Fall	🌸 ☀️ 🍂
Scale insects	Insect/scale	Spring crawlers; visible year-round	🌸 ❄️

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Active Season</u>	<u>Icons</u>
Maple borers (flatheaded & roundheaded borers)	Insect/borer	Summer	
Anthracnose / leaf spot	Fungus	Spring–Summer	 
Tar spot (less common in CO)	Fungus	Spring infection; visible Summer	 
Verticillium wilt	Fungus	Spring–Fall	  
Chlorosis (very common)	Abiotic	Spring–Summer	 
Leaf scorch (heat/drought)	Abiotic	Summer–Fall	 

Pest & Disease Guide (Homeowner-Friendly)

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Common Symptoms</u>	<u>Treatment & Management</u>
Aphids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sticky honeydew, sooty mold • Leaf curling • Attracts ants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hose off foliage • Encourage natural predators • Systemic treatments for major outbreaks
Scale Insects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard or cottony bumps on bark • Yellowing leaves • Branch dieback if severe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat crawler stage in late spring • Apply horticultural oil late winter • Prune infested twigs

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Common Symptoms</u>	<u>Treatment & Management</u>
Maple Borers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D-shaped or round exit holes • Boring dust • Branch dieback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent stress with deep watering & mulch • Avoid trunk injury • Professional preventive sprays during active periods
Anthracnose / Leaf Spot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown irregular leaf blotches • Early leaf drop in wet springs • Distorted growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove infected leaves • Improve airflow; avoid overhead irrigation • Fungicides rarely needed
Tar Spot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised black “tar-like” spots on leaves • Mostly cosmetic • More common in humid climates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rake and remove leaves in fall • No chemical treatment typically needed
Verticillium Wilt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudden wilting of one side of tree • Brown streaks in sapwood • Scorch-like symptoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No cure—manage stress • Prune affected limbs • Deep watering & mulch help slow progression
Chlorosis (Iron Deficiency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yellow leaves with bright green veins • Poor growth • Twig dieback in severe cases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trunk injections or soil iron treatments (pros) • Improve drainage & soil aeration • Avoid overwatering in clay soils
Leaf Scorch (Heat/Drought)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown crispy edges • Early fall color • Premature leaf drop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep water every 2–3 weeks • Maintain mulch ring • Protect from reflected heat surfaces

When to Worry vs. When It’s Cosmetic

● **When to Worry (action recommended)**

- Severe yellowing/chlorosis across canopy
- D-shaped or round borer exit holes
- Sudden branch wilting (possible **Verticillium wilt**)
- Large-scale leaf drop early in season
- Repeated scorch and decline year after year

Red Maples *frequently* show chlorosis in Colorado due to alkaline soils—long-term solutions may require soil remediation or replacement with more tolerant species.

● **Mostly Cosmetic (monitor only)**

- Light anthracnose or leaf spot in spring
- Minor honeydew from aphids
- Occasional scorch during heat waves
- Small tar spot lesions
- Early fall color in drought years

These typically resolve with **proper watering and seasonal changes**.