



Leadwort

LIGHT: Full sun

SOIL: Loamy, well-draining soil

HARDINESS:

USDA Zones

5-10

By the time the season is in full swing, leadwort's foliage has deepened to a shameless, A-for-adultery scarlet.

Acer semenovii

WOODY PLANTS ADAPTED to the harsh, dry climate and alkaline clay soils of the interior West are hard to come by, especially ones with interesting features. Usually just the fact that a tree or shrub has leaves and grows ensures it a place in our long-suffering hearts. *Acer tataricum* subsp. *semenovii* (also seen as *A. semenovii* and *A. ginnala* var. *semenovii*), the Turkestan shrub maple, is one such plant—a multistemmed 15-foot toughie with a lot going for it.

Turkestan shrub maple sports the shiny, dark green, three- to five-lobed foliage of the Amur maple, *A. ginnala*, yet even smaller and more finely cut. It also has that species' outrageous red fall color. It shares Tatarian maple's tolerance for high pH and clay, without the abhorrent yellow foliage chlorosis that Amur maple suffers in such soils

In mid-spring, a multitude of creamy flowers in small panicles exude a sweet, almost lily-of-the-valley fragrance. These go on to form pairs of small, reddish, winged samaras. Red also features strongly in the leaf petioles and midribs of the immature foliage, a hint of the stunning fall display to come. The bark on my young plant is a smooth, pale gray, which is nice in winter.

The tree is fast-growing but not prone to wind or snow

breakage—in four years a six-inch plant has grown to more than five feet on my windy hillside, where it receives less than 20 inches of moisture a year, a rare feat for a woody plant. —*Lauren Springer*



Acer semenovii

LIGHT: Full sun

SOIL: Average well-draining soil

HARDINESS:

USDA Zones

3-7

Kirengeshoma

TO EARN ITS KEEP in my garden, a plant must be distinctive at ten paces. I want maximum return from each square foot of planting, and one plant that

