Horsechestnut, Fort McNair

Aesculus x carnea 'Fort McNair'

Height: 32 feet

Spread: 30 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4b

Description:

A hybrid small tree with very showy panicles of pink and yellow flowers in spring; ideal for many landscape applications, makes a great accent tree for the smaller home landscape; spiny seeds may necessitate some maintenance

Ornamental Features

Horsechestnut, Fort McNair features bold spikes of pink flowers with yellow eyes rising above the foliage in late spring. It has dark green deciduous foliage which emerges light green in spring. The palmate leaves turn yellow in fall. However, the fruit can be messy in the landscape and may require occasional clean-up.

Landscape Attributes

Horsechestnut, Fort McNair is a dense deciduous tree with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage.

This tree will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It is a good choice for attracting birds and butterflies to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Messy

Horsechestnut, Fort McNair is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade



Horsechestnut, Fort McNair flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Horsechestnut, Fort McNair in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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Planting & Growing

Horsechestnut, Fort McNair will grow to be about 32 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 30 feet. It has a high canopy of foliage that sits well above the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. As it matures, the lower branches of this tree can be strategically removed to create a high enough canopy to support unobstructed human traffic underneath. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 60 years or more.

This tree does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. This plant should be periodically fertilized throughout the active growing season with a specially-formulated acidic fertilizer. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This particular variety is an interspecific hybrid, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets.

Clean up Rating (1-5) 1=least effort 5=most effort

Clean Up Rating (4): The Horse Chestnut trees have flowers that attract bees and butterflies. The spiny green husks are about 2 inches, holding 1 to 3 shiny nuts. Horse Chestnut (Aesculus) are considered toxic, the nuts and twigs cause stomach issues. Clean up of debris can be blown or raked onto the lawn and mowed or raked.



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