

# *Carpinus betulus* 'Lucas'

## Lucas Hornbeam



*Carpinus betulus* 'Lucas' (hornbeam Lucas) was selected in 1990 from *Carpinus betulus* by the Houtmeyers nursery in Belgium. This specimen stood out thanks to its columnar habit, the healthy-looking dark green foliage and because the foliage stays on well into winter. The tree was named after the nurseryman's son. Since it is a fairly recent introduction, the ultimate size of hornbeam Lucas is difficult to gauge. As a young tree it has a columnar to narrow pyramidal growth habit. The tree will become a little broader with age, with an estimated height of eight to ten metres and a width of three to six metres.

The foliage of *Carpinus betulus* 'Lucas' emerges with red tips and is a lovely dark green during the summer months. The leaf is slightly larger than that of the species. In the autumn the leaf changes to a mellow brown-yellow to golden yellow. Another reason why the tree was selected is because it retains its brown foliage well into winter. Consequently, this narrow hornbeam makes a good alternative to columnar beeches. The brown-grey twigs of *Carpinus betulus* 'Lucas' are fairly thick. The trunk remains smooth and is dark grey. The green catkins appear in April and May. This is followed by the green fruiting catkins which change to brown in the autumn.

Despite fairly shallow root growth, *Carpinus betulus* 'Lucas' copes well in paved areas. Also, drought, wet and wind pose no problem for this hornbeam and despite a slight preference for loamy soil, the tree tolerates a very wide range of soils. This makes it an ideal candidate for (narrow) streets and avenues, in particular on the north side of buildings. Hornbeam Lucas can also add a lovely vertical accent in more park-like settings and gardens.

### TYPES OF PLANTING

**Tree types:** standard trees, feathered trees | **Topiary:** hedge

### USE

**Location:** street, avenue, park, central reservation, in containers, roof garden, large garden, cemetery, traffic areas, industrial zones | **Pavement:** none, open, sealed | **Planting concepts:** shade-tolerant, urban planting

### CHARACTERISTICS

**Crown shape:** columnar, narrow egg-shaped, narrow pyramidal | **Crown structure:** dense | **Height:** 8 - 10 m | **Width:** 3 - 6 m | **Winter hardiness zone:** 5A - 8B

### ASPECTS

**Wind:** tolerant to wind | **Soil:** loess, sabulous clay, peaty, heavy clay, light clay, sand, loamy soil, all soils | **Nutrient level:** moderately rich in nutrients, rich in nutrients | **Soil moisture level:** dry, moist, wet | **Light requirements:** sun, partial shade, shade | **pH range:** acidic, neutral, alkaline

### PLANTKENMERKEN

**Flowers:** catkins, discrete, pendulous | **Flower colour:** green | **Flowering period:** April - May | **Leaf colour:** buds red, dark green | **Leaves:** deciduous, ovate, ovoid, big, doubly serrate | **Autumn colour:** golden yellow, yellow-brown | **Fruits:** catkins | **Fruit colour:** brown, green | **Bark colour:** grey | **Bark:** slightly furrowed | **Twig colour:** grey-brown | **Twigs:** bare | **Root system:** shallow, many hair roots, central root

