

Gymnocladus dioica
Kentucky coffee tree, Chicot



Gymnocladus dioica (Kentucky coffee tree) originated in the United States, where it is widely distributed but rare. *Gymnocladus dioica* naturally grows on moist slopes or in the flood plains of rivers, where the tree can reach a mature height of 30 metres. In cultivation, the Kentucky coffee tree grows slowly, but eventually it can reach heights of 20 metres, with an oval, semi-open to open irregular crown. *Gymnocladus dioica* gets its name from the Greek words *gymnos* (naked) and *klados* (branch), which refers to its thick branches that particularly stand out in winter. *Dioicus* literally means 'two houses': there are male and female specimens.

The leaves of the Kentucky coffee tree bud bronze in spring, then turn light green with beautiful red petioles and in autumn, they are a beautiful bright yellow. The decorative leaves grow up to 80 centimetres, are doubly pinnate and mainly grow on the outside of the crown, creating a transparent umbrella shape in older trees. After the leaves fall, the petioles stay on the tree for a while. *Gymnocladus dioica* bloom long racemes of star-shaped, fragrant white flowers in June, from which striking large, toxic, grey-blue legumes grow. The decorative legumes stay on the tree for a long time in winter. The irregular, furrowed trunk of the Kentucky coffee tree is very decorative.

Gymnocladus dioica tolerates hot summers and cold winters, enabling it to properly handle an urban climate. The species has very deep roots, has no diseases and is quite wind-proof and is thus not only suitable for use in parks and large gardens, but also in squares, streets and avenues. Do ensure a decent, underground growth environment. The Kentucky coffee tree prefers fertile soil, such as river clay, loam and loess. But it also thrives in lighter sand soil. For the best growth, plant *Gymnocladus dioica* in a sunny to lightly shaded environment.

SEASONAL COLOURS

jan feb mar apr mei jun jul aug sep okt nov dec

TYPES OF PLANTING

Tree types: standard trees, multi-stemmed trees, climate trees, characteristic trees, solitary shrubs | **Topiary on stem**: multi-stem umbrella

USE

Location: park, central reservation, roof garden, large garden, cemetery, traffic areas, industrial zones | **Pavement**: none, open, sealed | **Planting concepts**: Climate planting, Solid planting, urban planting

CHARACTERISTICS

Crown shape: wide oval | **Crown structure**: open | **Height**: 15 - 20 m | **Width**: 6 - 9 m | **Winter hardiness zone**: 5A - 8B

ASPECTS

Wind: slightly 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 | **Light requirements**: sun, partial shade | **pH range**: acidic, neutral, alkaline | **Host plant/forage plant**: bees, nectar value 1, pollen value 0 | **Extreme environments**: tolerant to salt spray, tolerant to dryness, tolerates air pollution, tolerates heat

PLANTKENMERKEN

Flowers: raceme, star-shaped, striking, pendulous, big, flower-scented | **Flower colour**: white, green | **Flowering period**: June - June | **Leaf colour**: buds bronze, matt green | **Leaves**: deciduous, ovoid, big, bipinnate, composite, Nitrogen fixing | **Autumn colour**: yellow | **Fruits**: striking, toxic, large, frosty, pod | **Fruit colour**: brown, grey-blue | **Bark colour**: grey-black | **Bark**: deeply furrowed | **Twig colour**: grey-blue | **Twigs**: frosty, thickly branched, short shoots | **Root system**: deep, extensive, tap root, root suckers