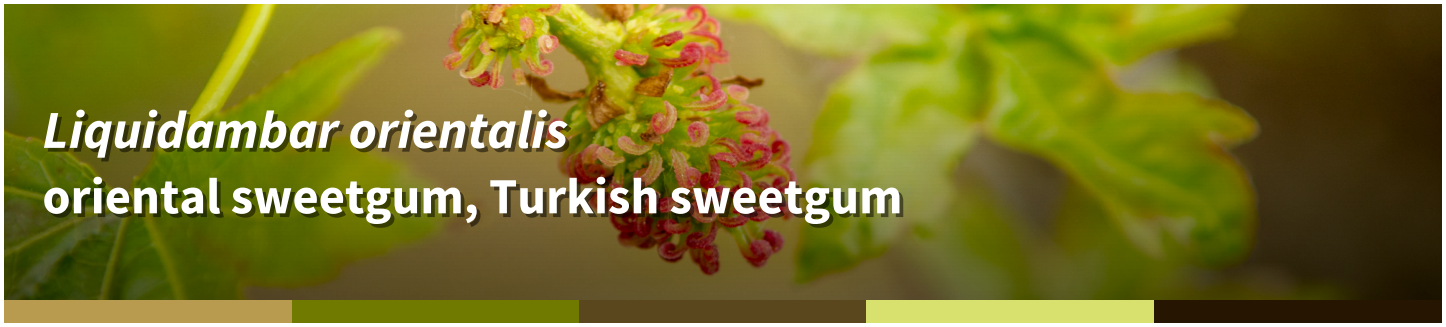

Liquidambar orientalis
oriental sweetgum, Turkish sweetgum

Liquidambar orientalis (Oriental sweet gum, Turkish sweet gum) is native to Turkey (Asia Minor), where the tree mainly occurs on floodplains and in swampy forests where it can attain a height of thirty metres. This rare species was first cultivated in around 1750. In its native habitat the oriental sweet gum is primarily used for the extraction of storax (also known as resin) to produce oil. In cultivation, the egg-shaped, compact crown of *Liquidambar orientalis* will not exceed between six and ten metres and rather has a tendency to remain squatter thanks to the horizontal to pendulous branches, usually up to a maximum height of six metres.

At the end of April or early May *Liquidambar orientalis* bears unremarkable yellow-green flowers. Coinciding with the blossom, palmate, 5-lobed, double lobed and deeply cut (serrate) leaves emerge bronze, changing to green in summer. The lovely autumn foliage appears in mid to late autumn and ranges from warm yellow-orange to scarlet red. The bristly capsules characteristic of the species appear in the autumn and stay on the tree well into winter. The oriental sweet gum has grey flaky bark in platelets, and green twigs and petioles which turn dark red on the sunny side of the tree.

Provided it is given protection from the wind, *Liquidambar orientalis* is a lovely plant for the enthusiast for parks and gardens. This species, therefore, requires a sunny site on nutritious soil. Based on its natural habitats, the rare oriental sweet gum does not appear adversely affected by flooding and will even flourish in temporarily wet sites. Juvenile trees are sensitive to frost and so *Liquidambar orientalis* is best suited to warmer climates.

TYPES OF PLANTING
Tree types: standard trees, feathered trees, multi-stemmed trees, shade trees, characteristic trees | **Topiary on stem**: multi-stem umbrella

USE
Location: park, large garden, cemetery | **Pavement**: none, open

CHARACTERISTICS
Crown shape: egg-shaped | **Crown structure**: dense | **Height**: 6 - 10 m | **Width**: 6 - 9 m | **Winter hardiness zone**: 8A - 9B

ASPECTS
Wind: intolerant to wind | **Soil**: loess, sabulous clay, peaty, light clay, sand, loamy soil | **Nutrient level**: rich in nutrients | **Soil moisture level**: moist, wet | **Light requirements**: sun | **pH range**: acidic, neutral | **Extreme environments**: tolerant to short-term flooding, curiosity

PLANTKENMERKEN
Flowers: discrete | **Flower colour**: yellow-green | **Flowering period**: April - May | **Leaf colour**: buds bronze, matt green | **Leaves**: deciduous, palmate, laciniate, dentate, lobate | **Autumn colour**: yellow, yellow-orange, scarlet | **Fruits**: striking, capsule, spiny nut | **Fruit colour**: brown | **Bark colour**: grey | **Bark**: peeling | **Twig colour**: dark red, green | **Twigs**: bare, corky, horizontal branches, pendulous | **Root system**: deep, shallow, fleshy roots

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