

Liquidambar styraciflua 'Gum Ball'

Sweet gum 'Gum Ball'



Liquidambar styraciflua 'Gum Ball' (Sweet gum 'Gum Ball', synonym *Liquidambar styraciflua* 'Globe') was found in 1965 by nurseryman Hiram B. Stubblefield of Forest Nursery Company Inc. of McMinnville, Tennessee, USA. This particular sort stood out due to a proliferation of short shoots growing from one area. In itself the slow-growing selection 'Gum Ball' remains a small, densely branched, spherical/globose shrub of approximately one and a half metres tall and twice as wide. It is often grafted on a rootstock of the wild sweet gum which creates a spherical little tree of around three metres tall and the same wide.

At the end of April or early May *Liquidambar styraciflua* 'Gum Ball' bears inconspicuous yellow-green flower spikes. The tree rarely yields any fruit but the small, spiky, brown-green nutlets which appear are striking. The palmate leaf emerges bronze-coloured, changes to matt-shiny dark green with a light green underside and is slightly hairy along the veins. In late autumn, this variety puts on a stunning array of orange-red, scarlet red and red-violet tints. The autumn foliage can be enjoyed for a long time as the leaf stays on the tree well into the season. *Liquidambar styraciflua* 'Gum Ball' - owing to the dense branching of shoots without corky fissures - has a fairly solid habit.

Its compact crown means it is not really affected by breaking branches and is, therefore, not sensitive to wind either. Its modest size means the selection is in particular suitable for planting in green open spaces, parks and gardens. But it will also do well in streets and on squares. Give *Liquidambar styraciflua* 'Gum Ball' a sunny site on moderately nutrient-rich to nutrient-rich, moist to wet soil for the best autumn colouring.

TYPES OF PLANTING

Tree types: standard trees, half-stem trees | **Topiary on stem:** globe | **Topiary:** globe

USE

Location: street, square, car park / parking lot, park, central reservation, in containers, roof garden, large garden, small garden, patio, cemetery | **Pavement:** none, open, sealed

CHARACTERISTICS

Crown shape: rounded | **Crown structure:** dense | **Height:** 3 - 4 m | **Width:** 2 - 3 m | **Winter hardiness zone:** 5B - 10B

ASPECTS

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

PLANTKENMERKEN

Flowers: spikes, heads, discrete | **Flower colour:** yellow-green | **Flowering period:** April - May | **Leaf colour:** buds bronze, dark green, underside pale green | **Leaves:** deciduous, palmate, matt polished, underside hairy, lacinate, crenate, lobate | **Autumn colour:** orange-red, scarlet, red-violet | **Fruits:** striking, rarely fruits, small, capsule, spiny nut | **Fruit colour:** brown-green | **Bark colour:** grey | **Bark:** furrowed | **Twig colour:** green | **Twigs:** bare | **Root system:** deep, shallow, fleshy roots, central root

