Liquidambar styraciflua

American sweetgum, sweet gum, hazel pine, American-storax, bilsted, red-gum, satin-walnut, star-leaved gum, alligator-wood



Liquidambar styraciflua (American sweetgum) is native to the eastern United States and grows in river and stream valleys. The English missionary John Bannister introduced the tree as a young plant in 1681. In its original distribution area, the American sweetgum can reach heights of over 45 metres, but in cultivation it usually does not grow up to more than 20 or 25 metres. *Liquidambar styraciflua* is a strong grower and is not affected by any diseases or pests in Europe.

In mid-April, the American sweetgum blossoms with discrete, single yellow-green spikes. The pentalobate, laciniate, palmate leaves become a glossy green and are scented with contusion. From September onwards, the tree bears small, brown-green capsules that stay on the tree for a long time. *Liquidambar styraciflua* has a lovely gradient of autumn colours, from deep red with yellow to orange to red-violet. The bark is light grey and furrowed, and the branches have characteristic cork.

The American sweetgum does grow in coastal areas, but does not thrive there. Salty winds damage its leaves. Its wind tolerance is variable: in dry soil, the tree produces a taproot to reinforce it against the wind, while in wetter soil, the tree only grows superficial roots and thus cannot tolerate much wind. *Liquidambar styraciflua* can easily handle short periods of heat, drought and flooding, as well as salt spray and pavement. Plant the tree in a sunny area for the most beautiful growth and in nutrient-rich, moist soil, with an acidic to neutral pH value.

SEASONAL COLOURS

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

TYPES OF PLANTING

Tree types: standard trees, feathered trees, multi-stemmed trees, climate trees, shade trees, characteristic trees | **Topiary on stem**: roof-trained, vase, espalier, pleached | **Topiary**: espalier, pleached

USE

Location: street, avenue, square, park, central reservation, large garden, cemetery, bioswale | **Pavement**: none, open, sealed | **Planting concepts**: Climate planting

CHARACTERISTICS

Crown shape: egg-shaped | **Crown structure**: semi-open | **Height**: 20 - 25 m | **Width**: 15 - 18 m | **Winter hardiness zone**: 5B - 10B

ASPECTS

Wind: slightly tolerant to wind | **Soil**: loess, sabulous clay, 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 | **Extreme environments**: tolerant to salt spray, tolerates air pollution, tolerates heat, tolerant to short-term flooding

PLANTKENMERKEN

Flowers: spikes, heads, discrete, singular | **Flower colour**: yellow-green | **Flowering period**: April - May | **Leaf colour**: green | **Leaves**: deciduous, palmate, fleshy, polished, scented with contusion, laciniate | **Autumn colour**: yellow-orange, orange-red, red-violet | **Fruits**: striking, small, capsule | **Fruit colour**: brown | **Bark colour**: grey | **Bark**: furrowed | **Twig colour**: red-brown, green | **Twigs**: corky | **Root system**: deep, shallow, extensive, highly branched, fleshy roots, tap root, roots push up surface, on own root