

Botanical Name: Liquidambar styraciflua, 'Burgundy'

Common Name: American Sweet Gum

Type of Plant: dicot: tree Character deciduous

Habit of Growth:

Overall Shape an erect, single-trunked tree (sometimes develops a second leader part-way up canopy); develops strongly pyramidal form when young; white corky bark develops on older branches; lateral branches short, spread horiz.

Height 20-40' (60') Spread 1/2-2/3 Growth Rate moderate

Environment:

Exposure outdoors full or partial sun; develops better fall color in full sun

Soil a deep moist loam preferred-tolerates wet soils

Hardiness hardy (zones 1-9, 14-24); thrives in warm humid areas

Morphology:

Leaves palmate, alternate, 5-7 lobed; 3-7" wide, with serrate lobes; petioles are 4-6" long; foliage is bright green; turns purple-red in fall

Flowers unisexual, small, lack petals; pistillate flowers are in round heads (1" diameter); the staminate flowers in small terminal racemes

Fruit tiny capsules; crowded in the round head "spiny ball"

Propagation: seed, followed by grafting

Usage: widely used vertical accent tree form, prized for fall color and branch structure; suitable for lawn or street tree; for groves or screens; shallow surface roots and suckering is a problem; fruit-drop

Landscape Care:

Watering regular; tolerates lawn watering-can survive drought after established

Fertilizing balanced, in spring; add iron to correct chlorosis

Pruning very little; remove only lowest branches

Pests/Diseases relatively free; resistant to oak root fungus

Special Conditions

Origin: East U.S. Family: Hamamelidaceae