Round Leaf Sweet Gum

Liquidambar styraciflua 'Rotundiloba'

Round Leaf Sweet Gum foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 50 feet

Spread: 30 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 5b

Other Names: American Sweet Gum

Description:

A tall, spreading shade tree with unusually rounded leaves that turn brilliant yellow, orange, red and purple in fall; somewhat particular about growing conditions; a fruitless cultivar, much tidier than the species

Ornamental Features

Round Leaf Sweet Gum is primarily valued in the landscape for its distinctively pyramidal habit of growth. It has forest green deciduous foliage. The lobed palmate leaves turn an outstanding crimson in the fall.

Landscape Attributes

Round Leaf Sweet Gum is a deciduous tree with a strong central leader and a distinctive and refined pyramidal form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance tree, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Round Leaf Sweet Gum is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade

Planting & Growing

Round Leaf Sweet Gum will grow to be about 50 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 30 feet. It has a high canopy of foliage that sits well above the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. As it matures, the lower branches of this tree can be strategically removed to create a high enough canopy to support unobstructed human traffic underneath. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 70 years or more.

This tree should only be grown in full sunlight. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It is very fussy about its soil conditions and must have rich, acidic soils to ensure success, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selection of a native North American species.