

## Sweet Gum

Liquidambar styraciflua



**Description:** Large tree greater than 100 feet tall, 4 feet diameter on prime sites, with spreading crowns in resinous sap. Star-shaped, alternate leaves and spiny gumball fruits. Corky ridges on twigs

**Leaves:** alternate on twig, simple, born singly on Leaf stocks 2 through 3 in Long. Blades 2 through 5 in across star-shaped with 5 occasionally seven points tooth edges smooth, lustrous green above, paler and slightly hairy below. They're bright autumn colors range from yellow to red to purple

**Bark:** pale gray and smooth on young trees and upper branches. Dark gray and deeply fissured into rough scaly ridges when mature

**Flowers:** unisexual on same Tree in May. Male flowers in large 2 through 3 in green clusters female flowers clustered on swinging 2 through 3 in stems, the globe shaped heads later mature into round, clustered, spiny gumball fruits. Many tiny dark brown seeds are wind scattered.

**Fruit:** spiny gumball shaped fruit that dries with Velcro like adhesive properties

**Habitat/Range:** wet bottom lands in flatwoods. Widely planted as an ornamental shade tree of high-quality; most of Indiana south of Indianapolis