Silver King Sweet Gum

Liquidambar styraciflua 'Silver King'

Height: 40 feet

Spread: 30 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 5b

Other Names: American Sweet Gum

Description:

A spectacular shade tree with interesting palmate leaves edged in brilliant silver over the season, finally turning rich crimson in fall; spiny fruit can be somewhat messy



Silver King Sweet Gum foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Silver King Sweet Gum has attractive silver-variegated forest green foliage on a tree with an oval habit of growth. The lobed palmate leaves are highly ornamental and turn an outstanding crimson in the fall. However, the fruit can be messy in the landscape and may require occasional clean-up.



Silver King Sweet Gum
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Silver King Sweet Gum is a deciduous tree with a shapely oval 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 high maintenance tree that will require regular care and upkeep, 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. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Messy

Silver King Sweet Gum is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade

Planting & Growing

Silver King Sweet Gum will grow to be about 40 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 30 feet. It has a high canopy with a typical clearance of 5 feet from the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. 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.



Silver King Sweet Gum foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder