



September

PLANT OF THE MONTH

American Sweetgum

Liquidambar styraciflua

Native Range: Southeastern U.S.

Hardiness Zone: US 6-9

Sun: Full sun

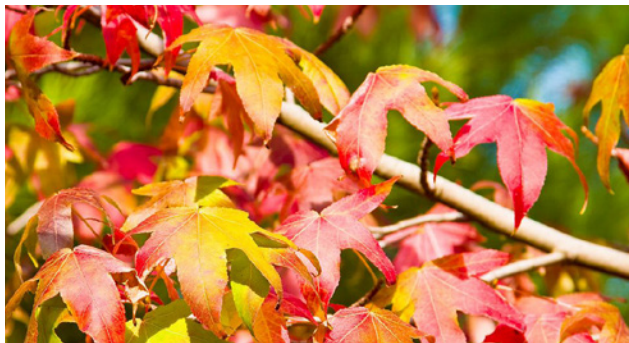
Plant Habit: Deciduous Tree

Water Requirement: Medium

In the Garden...

The American sweetgum is a native tree of the Eastern US well known for its fall color. Often found in parks and along roadsides, it is also an excellent choice for outdoor learning environments, providing shade in the hot summer months, color in the fall and habitat for the lovely luna moth.

The sweetgum is a favorite for the luna moth, though the moth can also be found in hickories, birches and willows trees. From quietly munching on leaves to spinning a silken cocoon, this gentle night creature will spend most of its life in the sweetgum tree. With some careful preparations and plenty of sweetgum leaves on hand, you can witness the magic of luna moth metamorphosis in your own classroom.



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Trivia:

The name sweetgum came from the sweet, sticky sap that the tree produces, which was also the inspiration for an old American idiom, “up a gum tree.” Can you use “up a gum tree” in a sentence?



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