

Ginkgo biloba

(Maidenhair Tree)



**September
2011**

Autumn foliage

Ginkgo biloba is a large, deciduous tree which has a narrow habit and grows up to 30m. It has a resistance to pests, diseases, pollution and many soil conditions making it an excellent specimen for urban planting.

Bright green, fan shaped leaves emerge in Spring and later they turn brilliant yellow giving a beautiful Autumn show.

Interestingly, *Ginkgo biloba* is neither a broadleaf or a conifer and has its own division, Ginkgophyta. Because it has no close living relatives, it is also the only tree in this division.

Often known as the 'living fossil tree', fossil records show that species closely related to today's Ginkgo have existed for over 200 million years across Europe, Greenland and the USA. Scientists believe that it was the glaciers covering most of the northern hemisphere which reduced its population and distribution to a small area of China.

Ginkgo biloba is the national tree of China and some specimens planted in temples are claimed to be over 2,500 years old.

Plant Profile

Name: *Ginkgo biloba*

Common Name: *Maidenhair tree*

Family: Ginkgoaceae

Height: Approx. 25-30m, though some individual plants in China are over 50m

Demands: Well watered and well drained soil

Flowers: No flowers

Foliage: Fan shaped, two lobed leaves with veins radiating from the petiole.

Bark: light to greyish brown. Ridges become deeper as the tree matures.

Available from Deepdale Trees as a standard or multistem plant



18-20-25cm girth Standard trees

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Ginkgo's many names

Ginkgo - When Engelbert Kaempfer discovered the tree in 1690 in a Japanese temple they pronounced the name *ginkyō*. He recorded the name with the spelling it has today. *Biloba* - from Latin bis 'two' and loba 'lobed'

Maidenhair Tree - named because the leaves resemble those of the Maidenhair fern - *Adiantum capillus-veneris*

Duck Foot Tree - Old Chinese records show that Ginkgo once had the name ya-chio-tu, translating to "leaves like a duck's foot".

Stink Bomb tree - The female plants produce round fleshy fruits which smell like vomit or rancid butter when they fall. For this reason, male plants are always used in planting schemes.

Silver Apricot or *White Fruit* - the more modern Chinese common names also alluding to the fruit produced.

Deepdale

When the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, six Ginkgo trees growing within 2km survived. Although slightly burnt, they recovered quite quickly and are still alive today.



Ginkgo leaf



Foliage in Autumn



Ginkgo bark



4-5m multistems



Ginkgo biloba standard tree



40-50cm girth Standard