Gleditsia triacanthos (Honey Locust)

Gleditsia triacanthos is a deciduous, fast growing tree. It has an open habit, casting only a light shade underneath its canopy. Tolerance of pollution makes it an ideal tree for urban planting.

Thornless varieties such as Sunburst and Inermis are available though they will produce few, if any, seed pods. Sunburst makes a good substitute for Robinia pseudoacacia Frisia which can be brittle.

In the past, the pulp for the seed pods has been used to brew beer and the thorns used for nails. There is a small market for Honey Locust furniture as it is a high quality wood which polishes well.

Plant Profile

Name: Gleditsia triacanthos

Common Name: Honey Locust

Family: Caesalpiniaceae

Height: up to 20m depending on variety

Shape: Medium-large oval shaped, open tree

Demands: Sun - very light shade, well drained soils

Flowers: Inconspicuous green - white flowers

Fruit: Long, flat, slightly twisted seed pods

Bark: Grey with elongated ‘plates’. Stems and trunk can have large, branched thorns. Thornless varieties are available

Autumn Colour: Golden Yellow
The name honey locust comes from the sweet pulp inside the seed pods which was eaten by Native Americans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Flower Colour</th>
<th>Thorns &amp; Seed Pods</th>
<th>Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>triacanthos</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Large tree with loose, open crown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inermis</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Large thornless tree with open crown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunburst</td>
<td>Bright yellow in Spring, pale green in Summer</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Smaller variety with yellow foliage in Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skyline</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Upright tree ideal for street planting.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>