

## 皂荚属 - **Gleditsia**, Honeylocust (*Caesalpinaceae*)



### 美国皂荚 - **triacanthos**

Origin: North America. Deciduous tree with wide, open crown which is beautiful even in winter without its leaves. It is easily recognisable because of the clusters of terrible thorns up to 8cm long on the branches and even longer, up to 20cm, on the trunk. Young leaves are bipinnate, the others pinnate, made up of 20-30 elegant pale green leaflets which turn yellow early in autumn. The flowers in May are green and therefore not of particular decorative interest and not very visible. On the other hand the fruits which follow are very showy and remain on the tree for most of the winter. They are long pods, up to 45cm long, often twisted, green when they

appear and later turning brown. Grows well in all types of soil, even calcareous and dry. Despite the dangerous thorns and fragile branches it is a very elegant tree for planting in parks and along avenues as it always keeps its harmonious shape.

### **triacanthos "Inermis"**

Variety without thorns, notable for its trunk which grows to the tree-top, lateral branches form a slightly pyramidal, compact crown. Foliage, flowers and growing requirements as for *G. triacanthos*. The fruits are also similar, but much fewer.



*Gleditsia*



### **triacanthos "Rubylace"**

Small deciduous tree, with open, aerated crown, more or less round, not thorny. Leaves have same structure as type, attractive brownish-red in spring, then bronze, green faintly tinged with red in summer. Insignificant flowers in May, followed by fruits like hooked legumes, which remain on the tree until winter. Suitable also for small gardens.

### **triacanthos "Sunburst"**

Origin: North America. Another variety of *Gleditsia* without thorns. It is different from the others because of the bright golden-yellow colour of the new shoots and leaves in spring. Seen from a distance in spring the crown looks like a lovely golden cloud. At first it has a slightly pyramidal shape with rather sparse branches, but later it becomes wider and compact. Deciduous, paripinnate leaves made up of 24-30 golden-yellow leaflets until summer when in our climate they turn pale green. Flowers and growing requirements the same as *G. triacanthos*. It does not produce fruit. It lends a touch of elegance to gardens of any size. Excellent to line not too wide streets, even in towns, as it withstands pollution.

