

Gleditsia triacanthos

[Synonyms : *Acacia americana*, *Acacia inermis*, *Acacia laevis*, *Acacia triacanthos*, *Caesalpinioides triacanthum*, *Gleditschia triacanthos*, *Gleditsia amorphoides*, *Gleditsia brachycarpa*, *Gleditsia bujotii*, *Gleditsia bujotii* var. *pendula*, *Gleditsia elegans*, *Gleditsia ferox* var. *nana*, *Gleditsia flava*, *Gleditsia hebecarpa*, *Gleditsia heterophylla*, *Gleditsia horrida*, *Gleditsia inermis*, *Gleditsia inermis* var. *elegantissima*, *Gleditsia laevis*, *Gleditsia latifolia*, *Gleditsia latisiliqua*, *Gleditsia meliloba*, *Gleditsia micracantha*, *Gleditsia polysperma*, *Gleditsia sinensis*, *Gleditsia sinensis* var. *nana*, *Gleditsia spinosa*, *Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *brachycarpus*, *Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *bujotii*, *Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *horrida*, *Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *inermis*, *Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *laevis*, *Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *macrocarpos*, *Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *nana*, *Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *polysperma*, *Gleditsia triacanthus*, *Melilotus heterophylla*]

HONEY LOCUST is a thorny deciduous tree. Native to the eastern and central North America it has fragrant, greenish-white catkins and leaves that turn clear yellow in Autumn.

It is also known as *Acacia negra* (Argentine), *Amerikanische Gleditschie* (German), Common honey locust, Confederate pintree, *Dřezovec trojtrnný* (Czech), *Driedoring* (Afrikaans), *Falscher Christudorn* (German), *Gledičia trojtrňová* (Slovak), Gleditsia, Honey, Honey-chuck, Honeyshuck, *Lederhülsenbaum* (German), Locust, Shucks honeylocust, Squeak bean, Sweet bean, Sweet locust, Thornless honey locust, Thornlocust, Thorn-tree, Thorny acacia, Thornylocust, Three-horned acacia, Three-thorned acacia, and Three-thorned locust.

Honey locust has a similar appearance to the Kentucky coffee tree (*Gymnocladus dioica*).

Triacanthos is derived from Greek and Latin *tri-* (three) and Greek *acantho-* (prickle, spine) components.

The ‘honey’ from Honey locust is for some a description of the taste of the half-ripe fruit and for others a reference to its nectar collected by bees.

North American Cherokee Indians ate the raw scimitar-shaped, glossy, red and green tinged, brown fruit pods when ripe and also used the whole pods or their sweetish-tasting pulp to make a beverage.

The tree’s wood was used by the Cherokees for fence posts.

Different parts of the tree provided medicine for various North American Indian tribes. The Cherokee not only used it to sweeten some medicine but also prescribed it for whooping-cough and included it with other ingredients in a compound taken for indigestion. They and the Meskwaki Indians gave it to patients suffering from measles, and the Meskwaki and Creek tribes also used it for smallpox (the latter as a preventative agent). It was a remedy used by the Meskwaki Indians for easing fever, and they and the Rappahannock turned to it for colds. Some of the Delaware tribe took honey locust as a tonic, and the tribe used it for treating some blood disorders. They and the Rappahannock also treated coughs with it.

In India the fruit pods provide fodder for livestock, especially sheep.

The seeds have been eaten by humans and the fruit are fermented for a locust beer.

The strong and durable wood was used for general construction and for making railway sleepers (ties), agricultural implements, furniture, building interiors and fencing.

Today the trees are planted as hedging and windbreaks.