

Clerodendron trichotomum: Harlequin Glorybower¹

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Introduction

This non-native deciduous shrub or small tree is usually 6 to 10 feet in height with multiple trunks, creating much the appearance of a large shrub. A small tree can be produced by staking the plant until a sturdy trunk develops. The dark green leaves are oval, five inches long and covered with a soft fuzz. In late summer in the full sun, the tree is festooned with beautiful clusters of delightfully fragrant, white, tubular flowers. The fruits which follow are blue/green and metallic-looking. Flowers and fruits can sometimes be found on the plant at the same time.

General Information

Scientific name: *Clerodendron trichotomum*

Pronunciation: klee-oh-DEN-drawn trick-oh-TOE-mum

Common name(s): Harlequin Glorybower

Family: *Verbenaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 6A through 11 (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: little invasive potential

Uses: container or planter; trained as a standard; specimen; deck or patio; espalier

Availability: not native to North America

Description

Height: 6 to 12 feet

Spread: 6 to 10 feet

Crown uniformity: irregular

Crown shape: round, upright/erect

Crown density: moderate

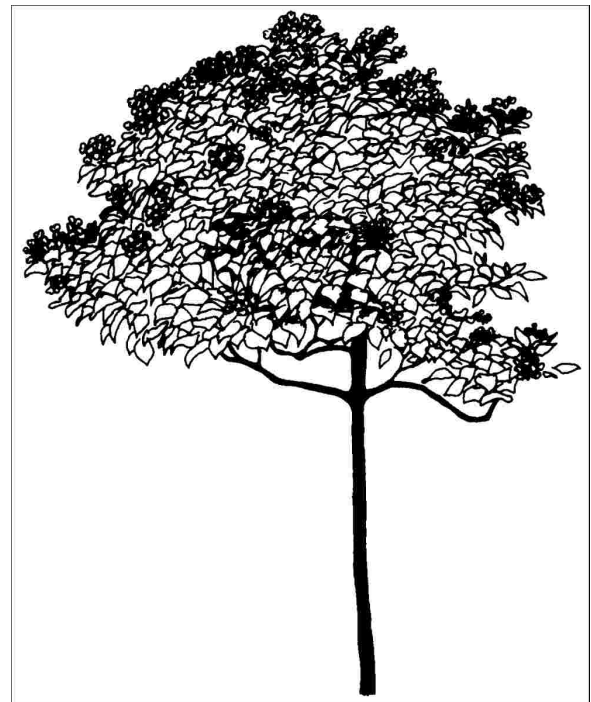


Figure 1. Young *Clerodendron trichotomum*: Harlequin Glorybower

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: elliptic (oval), ovate

Leaf venation: pinnate

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Figure 2. Range

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches, 8 to 12 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: red

Flower characteristics: showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: less than .5 inch

Fruit covering: fleshy

Fruit color: blue

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; not showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: branches droop; not showy; can be trained to one trunk; thorns

Pruning requirement: needed for strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: green, reddish

Current year twig thickness: very thick

Wood specific gravity: unknown

Culture

Light requirement: full sun

Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; acidic; well-drained

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: unknown

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: no

Outstanding tree: no

Ozone sensitivity: unknown

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: unknown

Pest resistance: resistant to pests/diseases

Use and Management

This large shrub or small tree can grow more like a vine if it is not trained and pruned. It can be used near the patio or deck as a flowering ornamental, or placed in a container in a prominent location for display. Not the best looking plant when not in flower, you may want to hide it for 10 months and then 'bring it out' when it flowers.

Harlequin Glorybower should be grown in full sun or partial shade with sufficient room to allow the plant to spread out. Often the bottom half of the plant appears leggy and should be camouflaged by underplantings. Sprouts and suckers regularly develop at the base of the plant.