



guide to growing...

Ginkgo biloba

Introduction

Ginkgo biloba is the sole survivor of a group of trees which grew on this planet over 200 million years ago and it has changed very little in all that time. It has survived all our planetary climatic changes and even survived the atomic bomb dropped at Hiroshima in the Second World War. This tree was the closest living organism to the epicentre of the bomb and although blown apart above the ground, sent shoots up after the war and now has a shrine dedicated to it at Hiroshima. It is a true survivor being very tough and untouched by any pests or diseases. Every part of the tree is used in Chinese folk medicine and it is gaining popularity in the West. Even without these attributes the Ginkgo makes a remarkable feature in any garden and is renowned for its spectacular yellow autumn colour. Often seen as a large tree in parks and gardens there are many varieties of Ginkgo biloba available. Some of these can easily be grown in a small garden. All are very well suited to container growing where they will live happily for many years with minimal attention and occasional feeding. We graft our special Ginkgos onto seedlings of Ginkgo biloba, ready to thrive in your garden.

Planting your Ginkgo

All Ginkgos should be planted with care. They can live to well over one hundred years, so it is worth taking some care in selecting and planting your tree. Preparation and planting is straightforward:

1. Dig a hole at least twice as wide and a little deeper than the root ball. Break up the bottom of the hole and add a 50mm or 2 inch layer of planting compost and grit mixture and chop into the bottom of the hole.
2. Carefully remove the plant from the pot. If it is any way dry, water it before planting, ideally by soaking in a bucket of water until all of the air bubbles have disappeared.
3. The surface of the root ball should be about 25mm or 1 inch below the soil surface. Mix the soil you have removed from the hole half and half with the same planting compost and grit mixture and use it to fill in around the root ball.
4. Water well. There is no need to add fertiliser as Ginkgos do well on low nutrient levels.
5. Finish the job with a bark mulch and keep it moist but not waterlogged through the first growing season.

Growing your Ginkgo in a container

Many Ginkgos do very well in containers or pots placed on a patio amongst other plants and with correct feeding and watering, can live happily in a pot for many years. To pot up your Ginkgo:

1. Use a pot no more than twice the size of the pot the plant is bought in, **do not over-pot**. Use a good quality multi-purpose compost and add 10% grit to this; or alternatively use John Innes No.3.
2. Top up each spring with a small amount of slow release fertiliser. Make sure the pot has good drainage holes and stand the pot on feet or tiles to allow free drainage through the bottom of the pot.
3. Remember to keep container grown plants well watered when they are in full leaf. **Do not rely on the rain** as most of the water will be shed away from the pot by the tree's leaf canopy.
4. If you wish to prune your Ginkgo do any heavy pruning in January to February. Light trimming may be done in the summer. If you have a variegated Ginkgo, some shoots may occasionally revert to green and it is wise to cut these out as you see them.

For any further information about your Ginkgo, please either call us on 01903 891466 or email us at info@bigplantnursery.co.uk and we will be glad to help.