



# *Clerodendron trichotomum* Harlequin Glorybower<sup>1</sup>

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson<sup>2</sup>

## 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 (Fig. 1). 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:** 6 through 11 (Fig. 2)

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** container or above-ground planter; espalier; near a deck or patio; trainable as a standard; specimen

**Availability:** grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

## DESCRIPTION

**Height:** 6 to 12 feet

**Spread:** 6 to 10 feet

**Crown uniformity:** irregular outline or silhouette

**Crown shape:** round; upright

**Crown density:** moderate

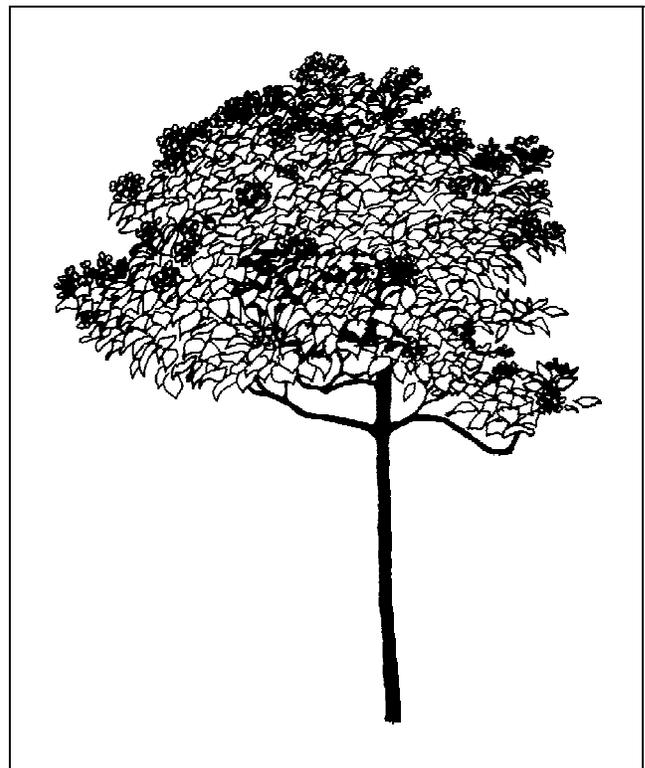


Figure 1. Young Harlequin Glorybower.

**Growth rate:** medium

**Texture:** medium

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** elliptic (oval); ovate

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Leaf venation:** pinnate

**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous

**Leaf blade length:** 8 to 12 inches; 4 to 8 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

### Flower

**Flower color:** red

**Flower characteristics:** showy; summer flowering

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** round

**Fruit length:** < .5 inch

**Fruit covering:** fleshy

**Fruit color:** blue

**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter problem

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; routinely grown with, or trainable to be grown with, multiple trunks; not particularly showy; tree wants to grow with several trunks but can be trained to grow with a single trunk; no thorns

**Pruning requirement:** requires pruning to develop strong structure

**Breakage:** resistant

**Current year twig color:** green; reddish

**Current year twig thickness:** stout

### Culture

**Light requirement:** tree grows in full sun

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

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

## Other

**Roots:** surface roots are usually not a problem

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding tree:** not particularly outstanding

**Invasive potential:** little, if any, potential at this time

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

## 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.