

Ailanthus altissima
Tree of Heaven, Stink Tree



Ailanthus altissima (Tree of Heaven) originated in Northeast China and Korea, and is the largest and most impressive specimen of the trees of heaven. In its natural distribution area, the characteristic tree can grow to be 40 metres tall and has a beautiful, half open and broad, rounded crown. The species was marketed in Europe by the French botanist Pierre d'Incarville in 1751. Due to its invasive character, there is currently a trade ban on the *Ailanthus altissima* within the European Union.

Its long, irregular pinnate leaves bud bronze in May, turning green in the summer and a warm golden yellow in the autumn. Around June, the *Ailanthus altissima* blooms large standing white-green racemes. These flowers smell very unpleasant. In the autumn, the tree bears orange-red, winged nuts in large racemes. These are toxic, striking to see and stay on the tree for a long time. Its gorgeous, authentic bark is quite smooth and lined early on, but as it ages it develops a unique, furrowed pattern.

The tree of heaven can be widely used, in locations including streets, avenues, parks and central reservations. But the *Ailanthus altissima* also thrives in industrial locations and e.g. in car parks. In the cultivation stage, the species calls for more attention, seeing the rapid development of its main branches. Heat, drought, moderate (coastal) winds, air pollution and salt spray are well tolerated, and with its high nectar and pollen value, the tree of heaven is fantastic at producing pollen. *Ailanthus altissima* grows best in rich, deep soil, but has few requirements for its soil and grows even under the poorest conditions.

SEASONAL COLOURS

jan feb mar apr mei jun jul aug sep okt nov dec

TYPES OF PLANTING

Tree types: standard trees, multi-stemmed trees, shade trees, characteristic trees, woodland planting stock

USE

Location: street, avenue, square, car park / parking lot, park, central reservation, large garden, traffic areas, industrial zones | **Pavement**: none, open, sealed | **Planting concepts**: Eco planting, Solid planting, urban planting

CHARACTERISTICS

Crown shape: rounded | **Crown structure**: open | **Height**: 20 - 25 m | **Width**: 15 - 20 m | **Winter hardiness zone**: 6A - 8B

ASPECTS

Wind: slightly tolerant to wind, slightly tolerant to coastal wind | **Soil**: loess, sabulous clay, peaty, heavy clay, light clay, sand, loamy soil, all soils | **Nutrient level**: low in nutrients, moderately rich in nutrients, rich in nutrients | **Soil moisture level**: very dry, dry, moist | **Light requirements**: sun, partial shade | **pH range**: acidic, neutral, alkaline | **Host plant/forage plant**: bees, nectar value 5, pollen value 5 | **Extreme environments**: tolerant to salt spray, tolerant to dryness, tolerates air pollution, tolerates heat

PLANTKENMERKEN

Flowers: raceme, standing, big, unpleasantly scented | **Flower colour**: white-green | **Flowering period**: June - July | **Leaf colour**: buds bronze, green | **Leaves**: deciduous, lanceolate, big, polished, leaf scented, dentate, pinnate, composite | **Autumn colour**: yellow | **Fruits**: striking, winged, toxic, large, raceme, nut | **Fruit colour**: orange-red | **Bark colour**: brown, pale grey | **Bark**: slightly furrowed, striped | **Twig colour**: red-brown | **Twigs**: hairy, pendulous | **Root system**: shallow, extensive, fleshy roots, root suckers, roots push up surface