

Pterocarya fraxinifolia
Caucasian wingnut, Caucasian walnut



Pterocarya fraxinifolia (Caucasian wingnut) is a deciduous tree in the walnut family (*Juglandaceae*) and a so-called relict tree. It is native to the mountain forests of the Caucasus, Armenia and Northern Iran, in particular on wet soils and in riverbeds, together with *Alnus glutinosa, Diospyros Lotus* and *Zelkova carpinifolia*. It was introduced in France in 1782 by French botanist André Michaux where it was planted at Trianon near Versailles and the Jardin des Plantes in Paris. The Caucasian wingnut often develops as a multi-stem or has a short stem and low-branched with thick side shoots and a dense crown. It makes a very imposing tree with a round crown twenty to thirty metres tall and approximately the same wide.

The Caucasian wingnut forms striking, yellow-green clusters, sometimes half a metre in length which hang on the tree like strings of pearls, of yellow-green round fruits with two wings (hence the name wingnut). They appear after the elegant yellow-green catkins which are not especially remarkable. The scientific species name *fraxinifolia* refers to the large, unevenly pinnate leaf that resembles that of the ash (*Fraxinus*). The fresh green foliage emerges in the spring, changes to a deep dark green in summer and finishes off a delightful mellow yellow colour in the autumn. The deeply furrowed, reticulate bark of older trees is dark grey. As *Pterocarya fraxinifolia* matures, corky fissures appear on the stem and branches.

The Caucasian wingnut is a healthy, imposing and ornamental park and avenue tree that can grow extremely fast once established and produces a lot of suckers. Because of its size, it is primarily suited as a solitary ornamental or climbing tree in large gardens and parks. It tolerates high water levels and is very resistant to air pollution and an urban environment. *Pterocarya fraxinifolia* prefers nutrient-rich, moist and mineral soils but tolerates many kinds of soils and pH values with its healthy root system.

SEASONAL COLOURS

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

TYPES OF PLANTING

Tree types: standard trees, multi-stemmed trees, trees for climbing, shade trees

USE

Location: avenue, park, large garden, cemetery, bioswale | **Pavement**: none | **Planting concepts**: Solid planting

CHARACTERISTICS

Crown shape: wide oval | **Crown structure**: dense | **Height**: 12 - 15 m | **Width**: 14 - 20 m | **Winter hardiness zone**: 5A - 8B

ASPECTS

Wind: tolerant to wind | **Soil**: loess, sabulous clay, peaty, light clay, sand, loamy soil | **Nutrient level**: rich in nutrients | **Soil moisture level**: moist, wet | **Light requirements**: sun | **pH range**: acidic, neutral, alkaline | **Extreme environments**: tolerant to short-term flooding

PLANTKENMERKEN

Flowers: catkins | **Flower colour**: green | **Flowering period**: April - May | **Leaf colour**: green | **Leaves**: deciduous, big, pinnate | **Autumn colour**: yellow | **Fruits**: striking, winged, large, catkins | **Fruit colour**: brown-green | **Bark colour**: grey | **Bark**: furrowed | **Twig colour**: brown-green | **Twigs**: bare

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