

Albizia julibrissin

Al-BIZ-ee-uh joo-lih-BRISS-in

Common Names:
Silk Tree
Mimosa



Deciduous

Fabaceae—Legume Family
Origin: *Asia—Iran to China*

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LITTLE BIT OF CONTROVERSY

Which Family?

Fabaceae

- *Interagency Taxonomic Information System (ITIS)*
- *USDA Forest Service*
- *National Park Service*

Mimosaceae

- *Sunset Western Garden Book, 2012*
- *Some systematists (biologist specializing in classification of organisms into groups based on structure and origin & behavior),*
- *Genus Albizia has become dumping ground for unrelated species in Ingeae Tribe (Kew Royal Botanic Garden)*
- *Needs to be monographed (revise all known species within group, add any newly discovered species, collect and synthesize available information) (Kajita et al, 2001)*



YES

Invasive ???

DC, FL, GA, KY, LA, MA, NC, NJ, SC, TN, VA, WV,
USDA Forest Service (2004)

Invasive Plant Atlas of the Mid-South

[FLEPPC](#), Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council, 1999
[Invasive plant list](#). Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council

[SEPPC](#), Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council, 1996

[Invasive exotic pest plants in Tennessee](#) (October
1999) Research Committee of the Tennessee Exotic
Pest Plant Council. Tennessee.

CA, Contra Costa Master Gardener Program
(2013), Not Recommended for Planting in Lawns

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Invasive ???

NO

- Not listed on California Invasive Plant Inventory, **California Invasive Plant Council, 2006**
- *Albizia* spp. Makes good patio trees, **UC IPM (Integrated Pest Management) 2014**
- *Albizia julibrissin* is listed as 1 or 260 trees for San Diego, *Ornamental Trees for Mediterranean Climates, the trees of san diego, 2005*
- Listed on the Street Tree Selection Guide (23 trees) for City of San Diego

- Common Names
 - Silk tree
 - Silky acacia
 - Mimosa
- Introduced to US as ornamental plant
- Occurs from CA across southern & eastern US to NY



from US Forest Service

Tree named in honor of:

Filippo delgi Albizzi, an 18th century Italian naturalist, who brought seeds of *Albizia julibrissin* from Constantinople to Florence, Italy in 1749

Description

- Deciduous tree—grows to 10'– 40' tall, often with multiple trunks



Bark—light brown to gray, almost smooth, spots along stem

Leaves



alternate

- Alternate, delicate, fern-like, bipinnately compound (pinnate with leaflets on either side of stem) 6-20" long
8-24 pair of branches, 2-6" long
- 20-60 leaflets $\frac{1}{2}$ " long per branch



Flowers

from May to July

- Pink, fragrant, look like pom-poms
- Flowers emerge after leaves





Seed Pods

- August–September
- Prolific seed producer
- Pods are flat, linear, yellowish brown, 5-8” long, 5-10 seeds per pod



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Seed Coats



- Impermeable with long-term dormancy
- Viability up to 90% after 5 years



Habitat



- Grows in disturbed areas— roadsides, forest edges, & various open habitats
- Hardy plant that tolerates variety of soil and moisture conditions
- Semi-arid to arid habitats
- Prefers full sun, but tolerates partial shade, and lacks cold-hardiness

Characteristics

Nitrogen demanding metabolism

- Fixes atmospheric nitrogen via symbiotic association with root-nodulating bacteria

Flower attracts bees, butterflies and/or birds

Leaves fold up at night

Average water—water regularly; do not overwater

Life span about 20 years in US

Problems, Pests and Diseases

- **Winter cold can kill tree—generally does not grow in northern US**
- **Vascular disease—Mimosa wilt**
- **Insect pests—Mimosa webworm & polyphagous shot hole borer**

Threat?



Trees grow vigorously & displace native plants, spreading by seed & vegetative means

Established silk trees are difficult to remove due to long-lived seeds & ability to spread vegetatively



San Diego Area

**Right Tree?
Right Place?**