

TREE OF HEAVEN (*Ailanthus altissima*)

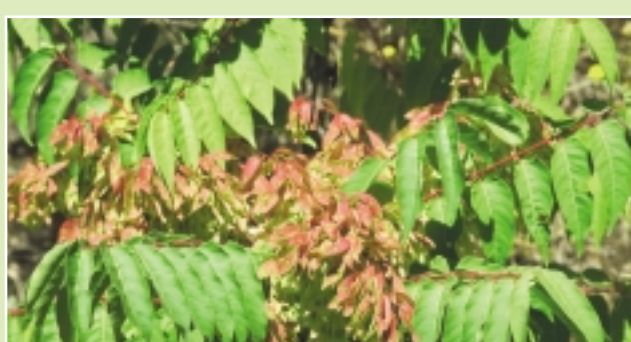
State Noxious Weed List: Not rated as of 2003



flowers



small tree



fruits

TREE OF HEAVEN

General description: Deciduous tree up to 60 feet tall, with gray bark. Leaves are up to 3 feet long; each has 10 to 40 leaflets. A heart shaped scar is left when leaves fall. Shoots typically have a life span of thirty to fifty years. Can spread from rootsprouts to cover large areas (as much as an acre).

Flowers and seeds: Small, unisexual, and yellow-green. Flower parts can vary in number, but typically flowers have 5 sepals, 5 petals. Female flowers have a foul smell. Winged fruits contain a single central seed. Fruits are 1 to 2 inches long, propeller-shaped, and straw-colored or reddish brown. A single tree can produce a million seeds each year. Seeds are only viable for one year.

Habitat: Primarily found in wastelands and disturbed, semi-natural habitats. Also occurs in riparian areas and other naturally disturbed habitats throughout California's mid to lower elevations, below 6,600 feet. Tree of heaven is tolerant of extreme soil conditions and heavy shade.

Mechanism of spread: Tree of heaven escapes from cultivation and spreads by root sprouts and wind-dispersed seeds. Seeds may also spread by water, birds, and on farm machinery.

Impacts: Produces abundant root sprouts, thus forming thickets that displace native vegetation, especially in riparian areas. Tree of heaven produces chemicals that may prevent native plants from establishing nearby.

Origin and distribution: A native of eastern China, tree of heaven has been introduced throughout the northern hemisphere. In California it was planted widely until the 1890s. During the days of the California gold rush, Chinese miners also may have brought seeds with them as they settled in California. Most abundant along the coast and in the Sierra foothills. In the 3-county area, there are scattered colonies of tree of heaven around old homesteads in the valley and foothills.

Important control hints: Hand pulling of young plants is effective, provided most of the root is removed so that resprouting does not occur. For more mature plants, cutting or girdling can be combined with chemical methods. Digging can work if rootstocks are removed completely. Fire is not effective. Grazing by deer and livestock may help in control efforts. See pages 4 and 5 for more information about control.

INDEX TO SCIENTIFIC NAMES

Scientific Name	Common Name	Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Acroptilon repens</i>	Russian knapweed	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	bull thistle
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	tree of heaven	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	Scotch broom
<i>Arundo donax</i>	giant reed	<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	klamathweed
<i>Cardaria draba</i>	Hoary cress	<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	perennial pepperweed
<i>Carduus pycnocephalus</i>	Italian thistle	<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	purple loosestrife
<i>Centaurea calcitrapa</i>	purple starthistle	<i>Rubus discolor</i>	Himalayan blackberry
<i>Centaurea diffusa</i>	diffuse knapweed	<i>Sesbania punicea</i>	scarlet wisteria
<i>Centaurea iberica</i>	Iberian starthistle	<i>Spartium junceum</i>	Spanish broom
<i>Centaurea maculosa</i>	spotted knapweed	<i>Taeniatherum caput-medusae</i>	medusahead
<i>Centaurea melitensis</i>	tocalote	<i>Tamarix sp.</i>	tamarisk
<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>	yellow starthistle	<i>Tribulus terrestris</i>	puncture vine
<i>Chondrilla juncea</i>	rush skeletonweed	<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>	common mullein
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Canada thistle		

NOXIOUS WEED REPORTING FORM

Surveyor: Phone:
 [name and affiliation] [daytime]

Weed Species: Date:

Estimate of infestation:
 [area size and/or number of plants]

Descriptive Location:
 [identifying landmarks, direction to site, etc.; **please draw map on back of this sheet**]

Section: Township: Range: 1/4:

Site Status:
 [roadside, rangeland, pasture, forest, riparian, specific crop, etc.; ownership if known]

Eradication Action:
 [none; or method: mechanical, biocontrol, chemical - type used and what rate?]

Other Comments: