PLANT FACT SHEET

Paulownia tomentosa (Thunb.) Steud.

GENUS *Paulownia* **FAMILY** Scrophulariaceae

COMMON NAMES Foxglove tree, Empress tree, Hairy Paulownia, Princess tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Flowers, Leaves

The leaves and fruit are used to preserve health.
The flowers are eaten with miso.
The leaves are parboiled and used as an emergency food.

DESCRIPTION

A small deciduous tree. It grows 7-15 m high. The bark is grey and broken by orange blisters. The leaves are opposite and are felted underneath. They are oval and grow 36 cm long by 25 cm wide. They are heart shaped at the base and taper to a point. Sometimes they have lobes. The leaf stalk is hairy. The flowers are purple and like foxglove flowers. They occur on the tree before the leaves appear. They flowers are 5 cm long. They occur in upright panicles 40 cm long. The fruit is green to brown and oval and woody. It is 5 cm long. They contain winged seeds. There can be 2,000 seeds in a capsule.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It is native to China. It grows in the mountains. Buds can be damaged by late spring frosts. It can grow in poor soil. Hobart Botanical Gardens. It suits hardiness zones 5-10. Arboretum Tasmania. In Sichuan.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It can spread by seeds, root suckers or resprouting. It can be heavily pruned back and shoot again.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It grows rapidly.

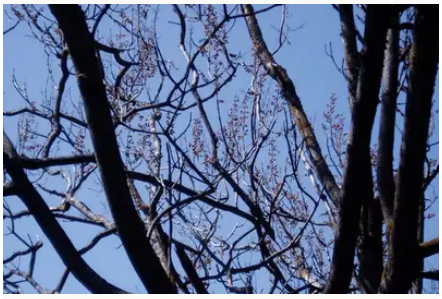
NOTES

There are 6-17 Paulownia species. They occur in warm temperate to subtropical Asia. It can be invasive.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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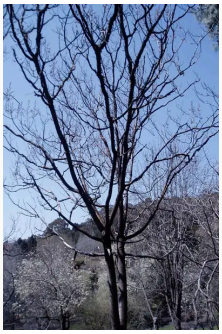

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