PLANT FACT SHEET

Albizia julibrissin Durazz.

GENUS *Albizia* **FAMILY** Fabaceae

COMMON NAMES Silk Tree, Siris

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Flowers, Leaves - tea, Vegetable

The young leaves are cooked and eaten as a potherb.
The flowers are eaten as a vegetable.
The dried leaves are used as a tea.

DESCRIPTION

A tree which grows up to 12 m tall and spreads to 10 m wide. It loses its leaves during the year. The crown tends to be flat. The bark is dark brown and smooth. The leaves are twice divided. Each primary leaflet has 20-30 pairs of secondary leaflets. These are 1.5 cm long. The leaflets fold together at night. The flowers are in round pink heads. The stamens are long and silky. The fruit are seed pods. They are 15 cm long.

HABITAT

It is a temperate to tropical plant. It grows naturally from Iran to China in open sunny ravines, forests and by rivers up to 2100 metres in the Himalayas. It needs a well drained but moist soil but can grow in dry soil. They can tolerate high pH, salty soils, drought and wind. Trees when dormant are hardy to -10°C or in continental climates - 20°C. Young growth is frost tender. It suits hardiness zones 6-12. It grows well in places with cool winters and hot summers. Arboretum Tasmania. in Yunnan. National Arboretum Canberra.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed, cuttings or suckers. Seed need to be pre-soaked for 24 hours in hot water. They germinate in 2-3 months at 19°C. Plants can be transplanted. Plants can be pruned and shaped.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is fast growing. Trees live for about 20 years.

NOTES

There are 145-150 Albizia species. They grow in the tropics and subtropics. This one can become invasive. Also as Mimosaceae.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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