

WISCONSIN WILDCARDS

ALIEN INVADERS



TREE-OF-HEAVEN

Ailanthus altissima

BASIC ID

This rapidly growing tree has smooth, pale gray bark with stout twigs, and very large pinnately compound leaves with 11–25 leaflets. Individual plants produce either male or female flowers. Seeds are two-winged samaras (helicopters) that hang in dense clusters near the ends of upper branches and persist throughout the winter. Leaves, young stems, and flowers have an odor often compared to rancid cashews. It can grow to 80'.

FACTS

Native to Asia and first introduced to industrialized Europe, then North America, for its flowers and tolerance to pollution. It is a prolific seeder with aggressively spreading rhizomes. It is common in many urban areas and invades forest openings, woodland edges, fence rows, fields, and roadsides. The novel “A Tree Grows in Brooklyn” refers to a tree-of-heaven.

MANAGEMENT

- Hand pull seedlings.
- Cut trees to ground level; repeat for resprouts.
- Apply herbicide (foilar or cut-stump).



Photo: Elizabeth J. Czarapata
Printed on recycled paper

FR-514 2013



<http://dnr.wi.gov/u/?q=48>