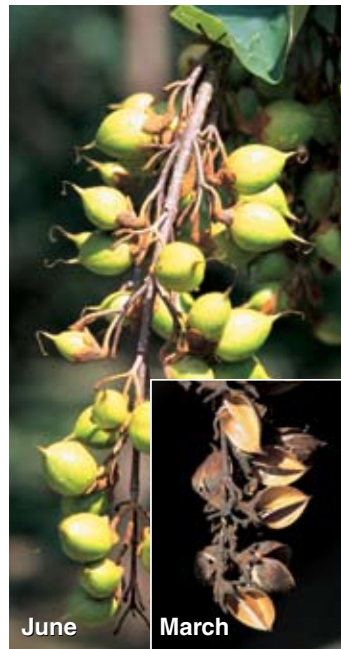


# Princesstree, Paulownia

TREES



***Paulownia tomentosa*** (Thunb.) Sieb. & Zucc. ex Steud. **PATO2**  
 Synonym: empresstree

**Plant.** Deciduous tree to 60 feet (18 m) in height and 2 feet (60 cm) in diameter with large heart-shaped leaves, fuzzy hairy on both sides, showy pale-violet flowers in early spring before leaves, and persistent pecan-shaped capsules in terminal clusters in summer to winter. Abundant flower buds present on erect stalks over winter.

**Stem.** Twigs and branches stout, glossy gray brown and speckled with numerous white dots (lenticels). No terminal bud. Lateral leaf scars raised, circular, and becoming larger, dark, and sunken. Bark light-to-dark gray, roughened, and becoming slightly fissured. Stem pith chambered or hollow and wood white.

**Leaves.** Opposite, heart-shaped and fuzzy hairy on both surfaces, 6 to 12 inches (15 to 30 cm) long and 5 to 9 inches (13 to 23 cm) wide. Leaves larger on resprouts, 16 to 20 inches (40 to 50 cm) across, with extra tips often extending at vein tips. Petioles rough hairy, 2 to 8 inches (5 to 20 cm) long.

**Flowers.** April to May. Covered with showy erect panicles of pale-violet flowers before leaves in early spring, tubular with five unequal lobes. Fragrant. Flower buds fuzzy, linear, and becoming ovoid in summer and persistent on erect stalks over winter.

**Fruit and seeds.** June to April. Terminal clusters of pecan-shaped capsules 1 to 2 inches (2.5 to 5 cm) long and 0.6 to 1 inch (1.5 to 2.5 cm) wide. Pale green in summer turning to tan in winter and eventually black and persistent into spring. Capsules splitting in half during late winter to release tiny winged seeds.

**Ecology.** Common around old homes, on roadsides, riparian areas, and forest margins in infested areas. Infrequently planted in plantations. Spreads by wind- and water- dispersed seeds. Invades after fire, harvesting, and other disturbances. Forms colonies from root sprouts.

**Resembles** southern catalpa, *Catalpa bignonioides* Walt., and northern catalpa, *C. speciosa* (Warder) Warder ex Engelm., which have leaves with sparsely hairy upper surfaces and rough hairy lower surfaces and long slender, persistent beans.

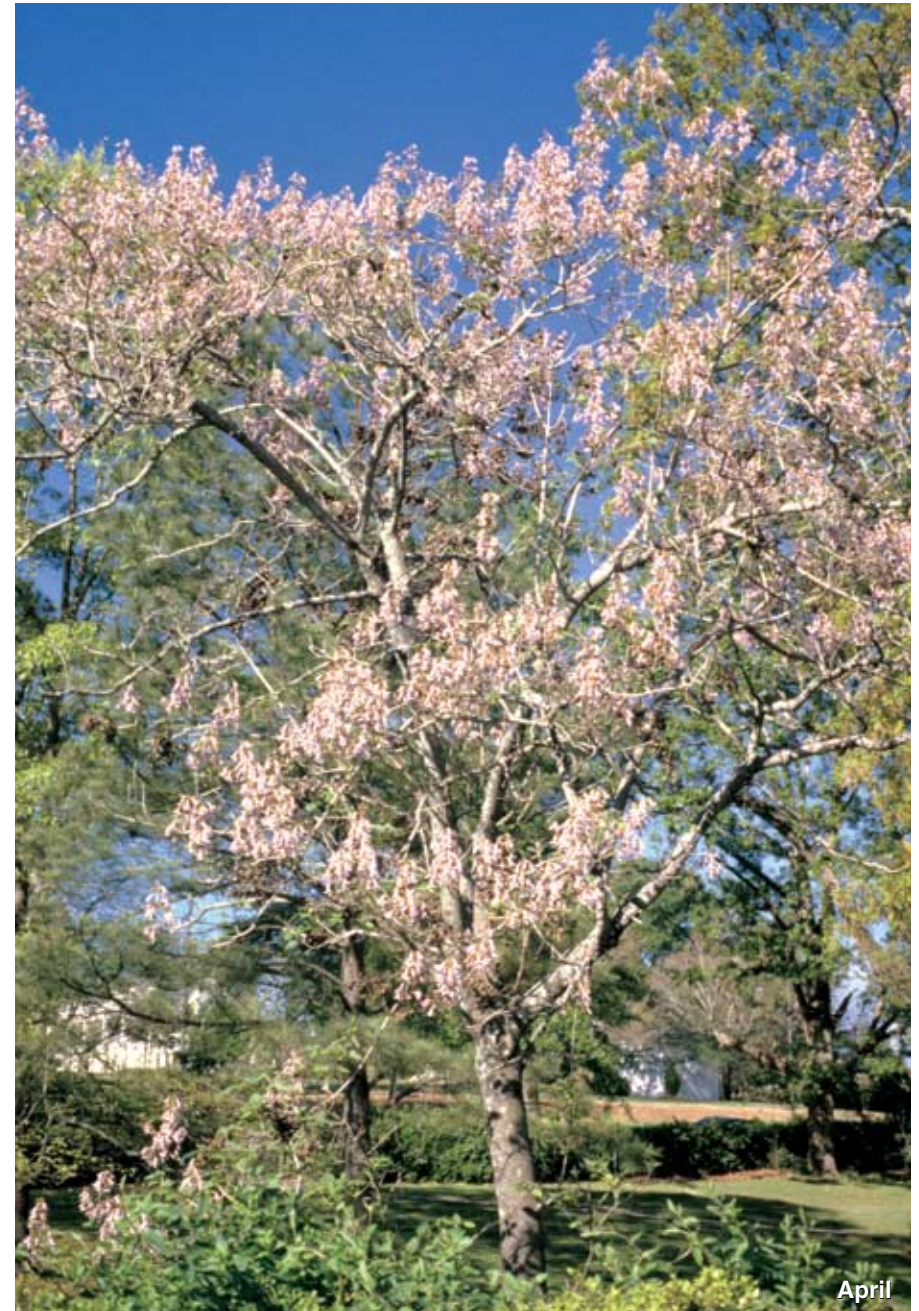
**History and use.** Introduced in the early 1800s from East Asia. Has been widely planted as an ornamental and grown in scattered plantations for speculative high-value wood exports to Japan.

States with suspected  
 infestations are  
 shown in gray.



## Princesstree, Paulownia

0712



April