

## Chinese Tallowtree



**Description:** Chinese tallow is a popular ornamental because of its fast growth rate, attractive fall color, and ability to resist damage from pests. It is a small tree that grows to about 20 feet tall, but some specimens can reach up to 50 feet. It is freely branching with leaves arranged alternately on branches. The leaves have acuminate tips and entire margins, with broadly ovate leaf blades and rounded bases. The Chinese tallow trees has flowers that are attractive to bees and other insects. It produces three-lobed capsule fruit that ripens from August to November. They are deciduous with a strong, deep taproot. This enables young trees to withstand periods of drought. Seeds are spread by birds, and moving water.

**Threat:** Chinese tallow can invade almost all habitats from wet to dry and from sun to shade. It often grows along roadsides, coastal areas, and streams. Some specimens can produce up to 100,000 seeds that may be eaten and dispersed by birds. Regrowth often occurs from cut stumps or roots. Native species are crowded out once Chinese tallow becomes established. The leaves and fruit are toxic to cattle and cause nausea and other sicknesses in humans.

**Control:** Prevention is an important control tactic for Chinese tallow. Landowners and homeowners are encouraged to remove full grown trees and seedlings from their property. Seedlings should be continually pulled by hand before they reach maturity. Alternative trees similar in size such as blackgum, maples, dogwood, and crape myrtles can be planted in areas

previously occupied by Chinese tallow. Mature trees should be cut down with a chain saw. The final cut should be made as close to the ground as possible and as level as possible. This will make an herbicide application easier as well as prevent resprouting from the cut. Seedling trees can be mowed or disked when small. Burning is also very effective for both small and larger trees. There are no known biological control agents available for the control of Chinese tallow, however, it can be achieved with the use of triclopyr-ester applied in an oil diluent.