



Chinaberry Tree *Melia azedarach* L.

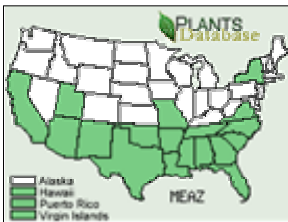
Common Names: chinaberry, Indian lilac, lelah, paraiso, pride of India, white cedar, China tree, bead tree, Persian lilac

Native Origin: Introduced from Asia in mid-1800s as an ornamental.

Description: A deciduous small to medium-sized tree in the mahogany family (Meliaceae), growing to a height of 50 feet (15 m) and diameter of 2 feet (60 cm), with spreading crown and branched trunk with multiple boles. **Stems** are stout, glossy olive green to brown with numerous lighter dots (lenticels) and three-lobed leaf scar. Buds are small, round and fuzzy light brown. **Bark** is dark chocolate brown becoming increasingly fissured with age. Wood is soft and white. Lacy, dark-green **leaves** are alternately whorled, bipinnately compound, 1 to 2 feet (30 to 60 cm) long and 9 to 16 inches (23 to 40 cm) wide with a musky odor. Each leaflet lanceolate with tapering tips, 1 to 3 inches (2.5 to 8 cm) long and 0.5 to 1.2 inches (1 to 3 cm) wide. Glossy dark green with light-green midvein above and pale green with lighter-green midvein beneath, becoming golden yellow in fall. Long loose clusters of pinkish-lavender to whitish **flowers** are produced in spring, March to May. Fragrant clusters of flowers yield yellow-brown **berries** July to January. Berrylike spherical drupe 0.5 to 0.7 inch wide contains a stone with one to six seeds. This fruit is poisonous to humans and livestock.



Habitat: This species is commonly found on roadsides, forest margins, open areas, clearings, and near dwellings, in low elevations (below 1000'). It is tolerant dry soils and semi-shade. Chinaberry forms colonies from root sprouts or sprouts from root collars, and spreads by abundant seeds that are dispersed by birds.



Distribution: Dense thickets of Chinaberry have overtaken native habitats, disturbing biodiversity. It is considered invasive in states such as Virginia, Florida, and Tennessee. Reported occurrences of *M. azedarach* in North America include: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Missouri, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and Virginia.

Control and Management:

Trees- Make stem injections using Arsenal AC*, Pathway*, Pathfinder II, or Garlon 3A in dilutions and cut spacing specified on the herbicide label (anytime except March and April). For felled trees, apply these herbicides to stem and stump tops immediately after cutting.

Saplings- Apply Garlon 4 as a 20-percent solution in commercially available basal oil, diesel fuel, or kerosene (2.5 quarts per 3-gallon mix) with a penetrate to young bark as a basal spray.

Sprouts and seedlings- Thoroughly wet all leaves with one of the following herbicides in water with a surfactant (July to October): Garlon 3A or Garlon 4 as a 2-percent solution (8 ounces per 3-gallon mix); Arsenal AC* as a 1-percent solution (4 ounces per 3-gallon mix)

References: <http://plants.usda.gov>, www.invasive.org, http://enature.com/native_invasive/invasives_top.asp, *Nonnative Invasive Plants of Southern Forests*, USDA. Miller, James H. p. 8-9, Virginia Tech Dept. of Forestry-www.cnr.vt.edu/dendro/dendrology/syllabus/mazedarach.htm, <http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/esadocs/documnts/meliaze.html>-Element Stewardship Abstract for *Melia azedarach*