

Golden Rain Tree

Koelreuteria paniculata

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: This tree is native to China, Korea and Japan. It is commonly used as an ornamental tree in all temperate regions of the world. It is a moderately sized tree with a spread about the same as its height. It produces a vibrant yellow flowering display for up to a month, with reddish seedpods following. The bark is grey, thin with intercepting ridges and is susceptible to damage. The root system doesn't spread widely making it an ideal city street tree and for smaller landscapes. Leaves are pinnate compound with a feather shape to the leaflets. It is invasive in the southeastern United States. It is pollution resistant and drought tolerant.

HABIT AND SIZE: 30-40' both tall and wide. The outline is a flattened oval with spreading branches. The smaller branches are usually pruned to prevent breakage due to wind.

LANDSCAPE VALUE: It is used for smaller landscapes, as a city street tree and on narrow paths due to its smaller root system. Bright yellow flowers in the early summer and good yellow fall color.

LEAVES: Alternate, Pinnately compound, feathery leaves up to 18" long, each leaf having 7-17 irregularly lobed leaflets. Leaflets are 2 to 4 inches or less than 2 inches in size. Leaves are pinkish bronze to purplish in spring, mature to a bright green in summer. Fall foliage is variable but usually a strong yellow color.

FLOWERS: Showy yellow flowers that are 1/2" wide appear in early summer in long, terminal, panicles of 12-15". Falling blossoms may or may not resemble "golden rain", but the fallen blossoms often form an attractive golden carpet under the tree.

FRUIT: The fruit is a three-parted inflated papery pod 3-6 cm long and 2-4 cm broad and resembles a Chinese lantern. Green then ripening orange to pink in autumn, containing several dark brown to black seeds 5-8 mm diameter. Seeds germinate readily in soil.

BUD: Axillary buds vegetative buds with overlapping scales with short hairs all over older buds.

DISEASES AND INSECTS: Susceptible to root rot, canker and flat-head borer beetles. Most of the damage can be reduced by pruning.

HARDINESS AND RANGE: All regions in Zones 5-9.

CULTIVARS: 'Fastigiata' - upright growth habit; 'September' - late flowering habit; 'Stadher's Hill' - deep reddish fruits.