

U.S. National Early Detection and Rapid Response System for Invasive Plants

EDRR Fact Sheet

Randy G. Westbrooks, U.S. Geological Survey, Whiteville, North Carolina. USA.

Common Name: Chinese Tallow

Scientific Name: *Triadica sebifera* (L.)

Small

Family: Euphorbiaceae

Synonyms: *Croton sebiferum* L. and *Sapium sebiferum* (L.) Roxb.

Description: A deciduous tree reaching 60' in height. **Leaves** alternate, heart-shaped, 2-3" long with a long, pointed tip. When injured, the leaves exude a milky sap. **Flowers** yellowish, on 8" dangling spikes, April – June. **Developing Fruit** greenish three-lobed, in clusters at the ends of branches. **Mature fruit** black, opening to reveal white, popcorn-like wax covered seeds.

Habitat: Tallow tree invades a variety of disturbed sites (stream banks, ditches, as well as upland dry sites) and will live in a variety of soil conditions (alkaline, saline, and acidic).

Native Range: China.



Pathways of Introduction and Spread:

Chinese tallow tree was introduced into South Carolina in 1776 for ornamental purpose and for seed oil production (to make candles, soap, and etc.).

U.S. and Canada Distribution:

Ecological and Economic Impacts: Chinese tallowtree is a serious threat because of its ability to invade undisturbed forests and other natural areas. It can displace native vegetation and alter soil conditions due to the high tannin content of the leaf litter. The milky, white sap is a skin irritant and diarrheic in humans.

Manual Control: Mechanical control is not recommended because plants readily resprout from roots. However, controlled burns can be effective in controlling the plant during the growing season.

Chemical Control: Chinese tallowtree can be effectively controlled with general use herbicides such as triclopyr ([Garlon](#) and others), imazapyr ([Arsenal](#) and others), and hexazinone ([Velpar](#) and others).

Regulatory Status: Chinese tallow is regulated as a state noxious weed in [Florida](#), [Louisiana](#), [Mississippi](#), and [Texas](#).

Online Resources:

Chinese Tallow Fact Sheet – USDA Forest Service – Weed of the Week Series.

URL: http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/invasive_plants/weeds/chinese_tallow.pdf

Chinese Tallow Images - U-GA Bugwood Image Gallery.

URL: <http://www.invasive.org/species/subject.cfm?sub=3079>

Chinese Tallow Profile – ISSG Global Invasive Species Database.

URL: <http://www.issg.org/database/species/ecology.asp?fr=1&si=712&sts>

Chinese Tallow Profile - USDA Plants Database.

URL: <http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=TRSE6>

