

## Plant Profiles: HORT 2241 Landscape Plants I

**Botanical Name:** *Koelreuteria paniculata*

**Common Name:** panicked goldenraintree, golden rain tree, varnish tree

**Family Name:** Sapindaceae – soapberry family

**General Description:** *Koelreuteria paniculata* is one of the few trees that bloom in mid-summer. It is an intermediate to large tree with large panicles of yellow flowers in summer, followed by interesting dried fruit capsules that add to its winter interest. Though not commonly used in the Chicago area, *Koelreuteria paniculata* does have good urban tolerance and could be considered for use in street tree plantings. However, in a severe winter it can suffer damage especially on young plants. Native to China, Japan and Korea this plant is sometimes reported to set seedlings and have potential for invasiveness. In Illinois this has only been reported in a few southern counties.

**Zone:** 5-8

**Resources Consulted:**

Dirr, Michael A. *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants: Their Identification, Ornamental Characteristics, Culture, Propagation and Uses*. Champaign: Stipes, 2009. Print.

"The PLANTS Database." *USDA, NRCS*. National Plant Data Team, Greensboro, NC 27401-4901 USA, 2014. Web. 23 Mar. 2014.

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**Creation Date:** 2014

**Keywords/Tags:** Sapindaceae, goldenraintree, tree, deciduous tree, summer flowering tree, yellow flowering tree



**Whole plant/Habit:**

- Description: Goldenraintree is an intermediate to large summer flowering shade tree.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: July 29, 2005
- Image File Name: golden\_rain\_tree\_3120.png



#### **Bud:**

- Description: The buds are arranged alternate on the stem and resemble "Hershey Kisses". There is not a true terminal bud. The bud features will aid in identification.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: March 13, 2012
- Image File Name: golden\_rain\_tree\_1340927.png



#### **Flower:**

- Description: Very few trees have a showy mid-summer flower. The large (1-2 foot) panicle of yellow flowers bloom for two weeks in July/August. The specific epithet *paniculata* refers to the panicle inflorescence.
- Image Source: Luis Fernández García L. Fdez. / 2005-07-05. Creative Commons cc-by-sa-2.1-es
- Image Date: Unknown
- Image File Name: Koelreuteria-paniculata-flowers.png



#### **Fruit:**

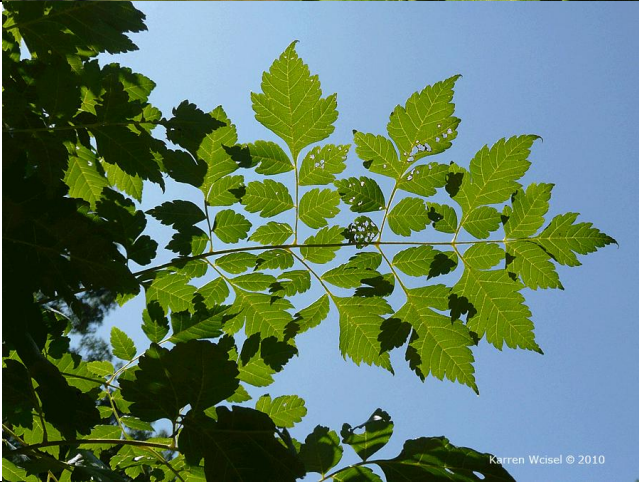
- Description: Showy clusters of immature, light green capsules decorate the end of the stems in late summer.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: August 25, 2005
- Image File Name: golden\_rain\_tree\_0212.png





**Fruit:**

- Description: In fall the capsules mature to a brown, papery, dehiscent capsule with a few hard, black seeds inside. They persist through winter and offer an excellent identification feature.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: October 4, 2008
- Image File Name: golden\_rain\_tree\_0442.png



**Leaf:**

- Description: The pinnately or bipinnately compound leaves are 6-18 inches long, with crenate-serrate (slightly scalloped) margins.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: August 25, 2010
- Image File Name: golden\_rain\_tree\_1180820.png



**Winter interest:**

- Description: Goldenraintree is a sparsely branched tree with a coarse winter texture. The persistent brown capsules add to its winter interest.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: March 13, 2012
- Image File Name: golden\_rain\_tree\_1340932.png



**Special ID feature(s):**

- Description: There are many good identification features on goldenrain tree including the Hershey Kiss buds, compound leaves and habit. However, the panicles of yellow flowers in summer and the brown papery capsules in fall/winter are the best identification features.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: January 5, 2012
- Image File Name: golden\_rain\_tree\_1340441.png