

My Tree Friend *Paulownia fortunei*

My friend is maybe not the first choice for a hungry gardener. However, on closer inspection it turns out that *Paulownia fortunei* is a ripper for creating a agriculture system based on permaculture principles. The reason is simple: If you don't wanna be too old or die before you can enjoy your own food forest, *Paulownia*, as one of the fastest growing trees, can help you establishing a canopy in only two to three years;

-providing half shade and wind shelter for intercropping, bee & livestock forage regarding a high nectar production and a tree foliage very rich in protein. Thanks to its deep tap roots, paulownia trees get water from deeper ground layers allowing intercropping with shallow roots crops.

Finally *Paulownia* offers a high quality source of wood, because of its outstanding weight to strengths ration. *Paulownia* wood is light, strong and water resistant, which makes it highly valuable for building, farming materials, musical instruments, surfboards, caravans, veneers, production of pallets and any kind of furniture.

Traditionally, when Japanese couples are having a daughter, they plant a *Paulownia* tree. When the daughter gets married, they cut down the tree and handcraft a furniture as a wedding gift. Apart from that *Paulownia* trees are believed to bring good fortune.



Characteristics	
family	Paulowniaceae
species	<i>Paulownia fortunei</i> (17 species)
origin	Central & West China
climate zone	temperate to subtropics but very tolerant to -20°C - 47°C
annual rainfall	600-900 mm
size	height: 10-25m trunk: 0,5-1m width, 2-4m lengths
growths	4m per year
tree form	open/ round, narrow crown
tree foliage	30cm wide heart shape Up to 20% protein evergreen in tropical areas
roots	deep tap roots
lifetime	max. 70 years
bloom	flowering in early spring for 12 weeks, first after 2 years, color: pearl white, lavender center
harvest	8-15 years
yield	100kg a year of leaves 400kg young branches
usage	wood and timber, edible, bare soil erosion, pest control, bee forage, livestock forage, tee
wood properties	extremely light and strong, high water resistance
other benefits	rot, decay, insect/termite-resistant, as a C-4 plant it is more water efficient
permaculture	excellent for intercropping, pioneer species for soil grow, windbreak, ability to coppice
special requirements	seeds are susceptible to rod by soil fungi, can become invasive

tree foliage
temperate → deciduous in winter
vs. subtropical → evergreen

Paulownia fortunei



bloom
in early spring
for 3 months

