

# Platanus × hispanica Mill. ex Münchh.

## COMMON NAME

London plane

## SYNONYMS

*Platanus × acerifolia*; *Platanus occidentalis* × *orientalis*

## FAMILY

Platanaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Platanus × hispanica* Mill. ex Münchh.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Large deciduous tree, monoecious. London plane (*P. × hispanica*) has *P. orientalis* as one parent; it has leaves less deeply lobed than in *P. orientalis*, and 5-lobed cf. 5-7 lobes. The seed balls typically two [(1)-2-(4)] per stem cf. 3-6 in *P. orientalis*. Bark peels in large flakes at irregular intervals producing a characteristic mottled or camouflage pattern

## HABITAT

Rather rarely, seedlings are found near plantings of this species. However, as the seed is wind and water dispersed this hybrid could become more common in situations well away from old plantings.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Deciduous tree up to 35 m high; trunk and branches upright to spreading and forming a slightly pyramidal to round crown of open branches; bark light brown, exfoliating on large trunks into creamy, olive and yellow patches. Young shoots and leaves covered in dense pale brown stellate hairs; twigs with moderate zig-zag, green at first, becoming grey-brown, glabrate or glabrous; buds conical, reddish, covered with a single cap-like scale. Petiole 5–8 cm long. Leaves alternate, 10–26 × 12–30 cm, green above, paler below; palmate, (3–)5(–7) lobed, lobes triangular to triangular-ovate, similar length to width, extending to c. 1/3 of distance to midrib; base truncate to cordate; margin entire or with 1–4 teeth on each side of lobe. Inflorescence rachis pendulous, up to 13(–25) cm long at fruiting; peduncles very short. Flowers in 1–3(–4) globular heads, monoecious, numerous. Fruiting heads 1.8–3.0 cm diam., bristly at first, becoming smooth as styles break off, comprising multiple achenes. Achenes conical, yellowish brown, with hairs on surface.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Oriental plane - *Platanus orientalis* (q.v.)

## FLOWERING

October



*Platanus × acerifolia*. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Auckland. Jan 2007. Photographer: Peter J. de Lange, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green

## FRUITING

January

## YEAR NATURALISED

1981

## ORIGIN

Europe. Cultivated hybrid

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental, shade

## CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Sullivan et al. (2002) showed that seedlings appear only rarely and they expressed no concern about the spread of London planes.

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

## LIFE CYCLE COMMENTS

Long-lived tree

## REPRODUCTION

Exclusively by seed and seed is short-lived and dispersed by wind, gravity and water.

## TOLERANCES

Cold and moderately drought tolerant.

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Sullivan, J., Cameron, E.K., Armstrong, T., Murray, B. 2002. The puzzle of wild London plane trees *Platanus x acerifolia* in downtown Auckland. Auckland Botanical Society Journal, 57: 99-101

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/platanus-hispanica-mill-ex-munchh/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/platanus-hispanica-mill-ex-munchh/>