

Japanese corktree (*Phellodendron amurense*)

Family name: Rue (Rutaceae)

Native range: Asia

NJ Status: Emerging Stage 0 – Absent or very rare. It is *moderately threatening* to natural plant communities. All detected occurrences should be eradicated.

General description:

- Deciduous tree to 50'
- Corky, ridged dark brown or gray bark
- Young growth reddish brown
- Inner bark bright yellow
- Has the appearance of an ash tree with grape-like fruits



- Clustered at branch tips
- Blooms June

Fruit:

- Grape-like cluster of round, 0.5" fruits
- Maturing to maroon or black in September, persisting into winter
- Fleshy with 5 seeds
- Dark, smooth, shiny



Habitat:

- Forests, roadsides
- Shade to part sun

Commercial availability: Not found

Look-alikes:

Botanists are examining the nomenclature of *Phellodendron*. Japanese corktree (*P. japonicum*), Lavalley corktree (*P. lavalleyi*), Sakhalin corktree (*P. sachalinense*) may all be reclassified as *P. amurense*. Each species demonstrates variability in characteristics formerly considered to be definitive (i.e. leaf hairiness).

Leaves:

- Opposite, pinnately compound
- 11"-14" long
- 5 to 13 slender leaflets
- Dull green above
- Lighter and smooth to hairy below
- Crushed leaves smell citrus-like, sometimes likened to a disinfectant or skunk odor



Ash species (*Fraxinus spp.*)

- Native tree to 100'
- Leaves opposite, pinnately compound
- Turning yellow in fall
- Single seed contained in flat, winged samara



Elderberry species (*Sambucus spp.*)

- Native shrub to 10'
- Leaves opposite, pinnately compound
- Turning yellow in fall
- Flowers white, borne in flat-topped cluster
- Fruits 0.2", red or black
- Bark covered in lenticels



Mountain ash (*Sorbus spp.*) and Sumac species (*Sumac spp.*)

- Native and non-native shrub to small tree
- Leaves alternate, pinnately compound
- Mountain ash has red-orange fruit
- Sumac has fuzzy reddish flowers



Flowers:

- Upright clusters of small, yellowish-green (male) and maroon (female) flowers
- 5 to 8 petals and sepals each



Mountain ash fruit



Sumac flower