

Paulownia 'FAST BLUE'

Princess tree 'FAST BLUE'



Paulownia 'FAST BLUE' (Princess tree 'FAST BLUE', synonym *Paulownia fortunei* 'Minfast') was selected as a cultivar of *Paulownia fortunei* by French breeder Patrick Pineau of Minier nursery. *Paulownia fortunei* is, however, only moderately hardy and because cultivar 'FAST BLUE' is most likely a hybrid, species name *fortunei* is less appropriate in this case. *Paulownia* 'FAST BLUE' has an upright pyramidal crown up to eighteen metres tall and between ten and twelve metres wide, the crown is not as irregular as that of *Paulownia tomentosa* and the branches are more erect.

In April, *Paulownia* 'FAST BLUE' bears large, intense blue-violet, bell-shaped to trumpet-shaped flowers in large erect panicles. They are smaller and bloom three weeks later than those of *Paulownia tomentosa* but they too are easily found by bees. The flowers fade to white before the egg-shaped, pointed seed capsules with winged seeds appear. Also, the leaf of cultivar 'FAST BLUE' is rather smaller than that of *Paulownia tomentosa* but recognisably heart-shaped, 3-5-lobed and still very sizeable. The foliage emerges grey-green and changes to green in summer. Princess tree 'FAST BLUE' has a slightly grooved, grey-brown bark and hollow stems covered with lenticels.

Paulownia 'FAST BLUE' has a more upright habit than *Paulownia tomentosa* and is consequently better suited to broad avenues. Its great heat resistance, rapid growth and high ecological value make this princess tree useful for cities, provided it is given a substrate very well suited to improving the habitat of trees and preferably plant the tree not too close to buildings on account of its extensive, fleshy root system. Cultivar 'FAST BLUE' tolerates a wide range of soils and even grows too vigorously on clay-rich and nutrient-rich soils which can lead to breaking branches. Tolerant of a degree of wind, it is better to plant *Paulownia* 'FAST BLUE' however in a sheltered and sunny site for best possible growth and blossom.

TYPES OF PLANTING

Tree types: standard trees, multi-stemmed trees, shade trees

USE

Location: avenue, square, park, central reservation, large garden, cemetery | **Pavement:** none

CHARACTERISTICS

Crown shape: wide pyramidal | **Crown structure:** semi-open | **Height:** 12 - 18 m | **Width:** 10 - 12 m | **Winter hardiness zone:** 6B - 9B

ASPECTS

Wind: slightly tolerant to wind | **Soil:** loess, sabulous clay, light clay, sand, loamy soil | **Nutrient level:** low in nutrients, moderately rich in nutrients | **Soil moisture level:** dry, moist | **Light requirements:** sun | **pH range:** acidic, neutral, alkaline | **Host plant/forage plant:** bees | **Extreme environments:** tolerant to dryness, tolerates air pollution, tolerates heat

PLANTKENMERKEN

Flowers: raceme, corymbose, bell-shaped, trumpet-shaped, striking, standing, big, scented | **Flower colour:** blue-violet | **Flowering period:** April - May | **Leaf colour:** green, buds grey-green | **Leaves:** deciduous, cordate, big, opposite, lobate | **Fruits:** striking, winged, capsule | **Fruit colour:** brown | **Bark colour:** grey-brown | **Bark:** slightly furrowed | **Twig colour:** brown | **Twigs:** bare, with lenticels, vertical branches, long shoots | **Root system:** deep, fleshy roots

