

Ulmus laevis 'Helena'

European white elm 'Helena', fluttering elm 'Helena'



In 2010, Dutch nursery 't Herenland in Eibergen selected a uniformly growing seedling from a row of old, healthy fluttering elms, which they released on the market in 2014 as *Ulmus laevis* 'Helena' (fluttering elm 'Helena', synonym *Ulmus laevis* 'Eibergen'). 'Helena' has a uniform appearance with an upright main trunk, unique for the unruly *Ulmus laevis*. Fluttering elm 'Helena' reaches a height of 20 to 25 metres with a width of around twelve metres, with a semi-open, oval crown.

The name 'Helena' comes from the ancient Greek *hēlios* - meaning 'sun' - and in this context stands for 'the radiant, the glorious', in reference to the fantastic yellow autumn foliage colour which starts close to the trunk and then the spreads via the branches to the tips. The large, asymmetrical, serrated leaf with coarse teeth emerges light green and changes to matt green in the summer. The fluttering elm is an important host plant for butterflies such as the white-letter hairstreak and comma. The selection blooms in March and April with clusters of red, inconspicuous bellflowers growing on long stems. The flat, winged nuts are also arranged on long stems and are egg-shaped. *Ulmus laevis* 'Helena' has a grey trunk that develops deep grooves; in older trees arbitrary root flares are produced which in wet sites develop into buttress roots.

Ulmus laevis 'Helena' is prone to Dutch elm disease - but just like with the species, infections are rare because the elm tree beetle does not favour this tree. Similarly, there are virtually no lice present on the foliage of this elm. Although fluttering elm 'Helena' makes an excellent landscape tree for damp to wet sites and even copes well with brief bouts of flooding, dry soil, paving or a spacious growing site in the city are no problem for this cultivar. *Ulmus laevis* 'Helena' is also tolerant of coastal wind.

TYPES OF PLANTING

Tree types: standard trees, shade trees, characteristic trees

USE

Location: avenue, park, large garden, cemetery, countryside, ecological zone, windbreak, bioswale, coastal area | **Pavement:** none, open, sealed | **Planting concepts:** Eco planting, Landscape planting, Solid planting

CHARACTERISTICS

Crown shape: rounded, wide oval | **Crown structure:** semi-open | **Height:** 20 - 25 m | **Width:** 10 - 12 m | **Winter hardiness zone:** 5A - 8B

ASPECTS

Wind: tolerant to wind, tolerant to coastal wind | **Soil:** loess, sabulous clay, peaty, light clay, sand, loamy soil | **Nutrient level:** moderately rich in nutrients, rich in nutrients | **Soil moisture level:** dry, moist, wet | **Light requirements:** sun, partial shade | **pH range:** acidic, neutral, alkaline | **Host plant/forage plant:** butterflies | **Extreme environments:** tolerant to salt spray, tolerant to short-term flooding, limited to rare infestation by lice, resistant to Dutch elm disease 3

PLANTKENMERKEN

Flowers: raceme, bell-shaped, discrete, pendulous, small | **Flower colour:** red | **Flowering period:** March - April | **Leaf colour:** matt green | **Leaves:** deciduous, ovate, big, matt polished, rough, doubly serrate | **Autumn colour:** yellow, golden yellow, dark yellow | **Fruits:** discrete, winged, small, raceme, nut | **Fruit colour:** brown | **Bark colour:** grey-brown | **Bark:** furrowed, buttress roots | **Twig colour:** pale brown | **Twigs:** bare, vertical branches, long shoots | **Root system:** shallow, highly branched, fleshy roots, clinging aerial roots, on own root