

# Acer pseudoplatanus

## COMMON NAME

sycamore

## FAMILY

Sapindaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Acer pseudoplatanus* L.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## NVS CODE

ACEPSE

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## HABITAT

Terrestrial. Coastal and lowland plant on sites with high fertility. Grows in a wide range of open forest and scrub types with moderately high light levels.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

UPL: Obligate Upland

Rarely is a hydrophyte, almost always in uplands (non-wetlands).

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Large monoecious, deciduous tree to 20 m high with smooth grey bark. Large 5-lobed leaves up to 20 cm long on slender reddish petioles up to 15 cm long. Small green flowers in dense clusters. Seeds 0.5-1 cm long with distinctive wings up to 4 cm long.

## SIMILAR TAXA

A number of exotic maple species are cultivated in NZ. All *Acer* species have the distinctive winged seeds but the combination of 5-lobed leaves (not compound) and the smooth trunk separate *Acer pseudoplatanus* from most other species.

## FLOWERING

October, November

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green

## FRUITING

late summer-early autumn (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995).

## LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. Species is deciduous (Porteus 1993; Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). Seeds germinate synchronously in spring; seed dormancy is broken by chilling (5 degrees Celsius for 6 weeks); seed bank is termed "transient" which probably means that the seeds don't last more than a year (Buddenhagen, C. pers. comm.). Plants are monoecious so some selfing may occur. Seeds produced annually, in bunches up to 40; probably greater than 10,000 seeds per tree. Seed bank transient. Seed dispersed by gravity and by wind (up to 100 metres)

## YEAR NATURALISED

1880



Upper Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 15/12/2001, Licence: CC BY.



Sycamore. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

## ORIGIN

Central and Southern Europe

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

## ETYMOLOGY

**acer:** Thought to be derived from the Latin acer 'hard' or 'sharp', the wood once having been used for writing tablets

## TOLERANCES

Highly tolerant to shade (although growth in the shade is slow) and moderately tolerant to drought. Fairly resistant to frost. Resprouting from stumps occurs after any physical damage.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/acer-pseudoplatanus/>