

Characteristics of Invasive Trees on Vacant Lot

Feature	Tree-of-Heaven (<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>)	Paper Mulberry (<i>Broussonetia papyrifera</i>)
Leaf type	Compound leaves (1–3 ft long) with 10–40 leaflets	Simple leaves, highly variable (oval, mitten-shaped, lobed)
Leaflet / leaf edge	Smooth edges, except 1–2 small teeth at leaflet base	Serrated or lobed edges, rough/fuzzy underside
Arrangement	Leaflets opposite on central stalk	Leaves alternate on stem
Bark / twigs	Smooth gray to reddish-brown; stout shoots	Light brown/orange bark; thinner twigs
Growth habit	Very tall (60–80 ft), upright, open crown	Medium (30–50 ft), bushy, forms thickets
Reproduction	Seeds (winged samaras in clusters) + root suckers	Fruits (orange, fuzzy balls if female) + root suckers
Smell	Crushed leaves smell foul (rancid peanut butter)	Leaves mild green smell, not foul
Invasiveness	Extremely invasive, rapid spread in urban areas	Highly invasive, dense thickets, very difficult to control
Hazards	Allelopathic toxins; hosts spotted lanternfly; root damage to sidewalks/foundations	Dense thickets; messy fruits attract rodents; damages native plant growth

This table summarizes the characteristics of Tree-of-Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) and Paper Mulberry (*Broussonetia papyrifera*) observed on the vacant lot. Both species are invasive, spread aggressively, and pose hazards in urban environments.