

Albizia julibrissin

Silk tree, Mimosa

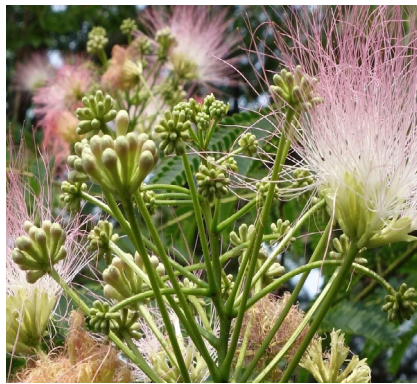


Plant collector Ernest Henry Wilson (1876-1930) was the most traveled of all the Arnold Arboretum's early twentieth century plant explorers. In 1918, Wilson saw this unusual tree in the courtyard garden of his hotel room in Seoul, Korea. He collected seeds hoping it would survive New England winters. "The origin of the plant in the Arboretum," he said, "affords a good illustration of the importance of obtaining for northern gardens types which grow in the coolest regions they can withstand." In other words, it is important to collect plants from the parts of their natural ranges where the coldest winter temperatures are similar to those of Boston.

In 1923, one of the saplings grown from that seed was planted in the Explorers Garden. That tree is now over a century old. Can you find it on your visit?



The silk tree displays stunning pink and white, powder puff-like delicate flowers starting in early July and often continuing into September. This long blooming period provides late summer nectar, which supports bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and other pollinators. At any given time during its long blooming period, you may observe buds, flowers, and spent blossoms on the same tree.



Albizia julibrissin at the Arboretum

Currently, there are a total of five *Albizia julibrissin* in the collection.

Two specimens are *Albizia julibrissin* 'Ernest Wilson', in honor of his contributions.

