

*Aralia elata* is a very distinctive tree with few, very thick branches up to a height of about 10 m. Initially, the tree grows vase-shaped, later in life the length growth decreases and the crown becomes rounded. The tree is naturally multi-stemmed and forms several thick, strongly spiny main branches. Because of the strongly spiny branches, *A. elata* has been given the Dutch name Devil's walking stick. The double-pinnate leaves are very large, sometimes up to over a metre long. They consist of up to 80 leaflets. In summer the leaves are green, before falling off in autumn they turn yellow to orange-red. The distinctive leaf marks of the fallen leaves cover almost the entire twig. Sizeable panicles of creamy-white flowers appear in August and are well-frequented by bees. The flowers are sometimes followed by small black fruits. *A. elata* prefers to grow in a somewhat sheltered spot in full sun or semi-shade. The tree can form a lot of root storage by underground shoots, which can be a nuisance in some cases. The large compound leaves are susceptible to damage by wind. The soil should be nutritious and humus-rich and sufficiently moist, even though *A. elata* tolerates temporary drought well. The tree does well as a solitary or in small groups. Its characteristic shape has