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Platanus wrightii

[Synonyms : *Platanus racemosa* var. *wrightii*]

ARIZONA SYCAMORE is a deciduous tree. Native from Arizona (United States) to north-western Mexico, it has small yellow flowers.

It is also known as Alamo, Arizona planetree, and Sycamore.

Wrightii commemorates an American botanist and plant collector, Charles Wright (1811-1885), who was botanist to the 1853-1856 United States North Pacific Exploring and Surveying Expedition. Initially he explored Texas collecting plants aside from teaching and surveying. In 1844 he sent his plant collection to the American botanist and plant collector, Asa Gray (1810-1888) with whom he then corresponded for the rest of his life and to whom he sent most of the vast number of plants he discovered. In the following years he was attached to various military and federal surveying expeditions, including in 1851 the United States-Mexico International Boundary Survey, and these enabled him to explore and study flora further. His first foreign plant collecting expedition began in 1853 and took him by 1855 from Virginia east to Madeira and Cape Verde, round the Cape of Good Hope to Australia (Sydney), then north via Hong Kong and the Bonin Islands to Japan and the Bering Strait, then south to San Francisco where he left the group to travel independently and collect plants in Nicaragua. From 1856-1867 he explored Cuba on several trips studying the flora there (in 1859 he was collecting in the Monteverde region of Costa Rica), and in 1871 he explored Santo Domingo. In between his plant collecting, and from 1871 until he retired, he often worked at the Gray Herbarium in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and he spent six months as acting librarian at the then Bussey Institution also at Harvard in 1875-1876.

The strong wood was once used to make buttons.

Arizona sycamore with its whitish-green mottled, pale brown bark is cultivated as an ornamental tree.