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Bobinac, M.¹ Andrašev, S.² Šušić, N.³ Bauer-Živković, A.4 Kabiljo, M.⁵ SOME ELEMENTS OF ECOLOGICAL ADAPTABILITY OF TREE-OF-HEAVEN (AILANTHUS ALTISSIMA /MILL./SWINGLE) TO A HABITAT OF TURKEY OAK AND OAK OF VIRGIL (QUERCETUM CERRIDIS-VIRGILIANAE B. JOVANOVIĆ & VUKIĆEVIĆ 1977)

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Tree-of-Heaven (Ailanthus altissima /Mill./Swingle) is exotic, rapid-growing tree species that intensively colonises stands of other tree species and urban areas in its surrounding due to its high adaptability, early maturation and ability to produce large amounts of seed every year. Presence of A. altissima in the stand structure is an important factor of stand degradation and is related to rapid growth of the species, and consequently dominant position in the structure of native tree species stands. Today, A. altissima is one of the most invasive exotic tree species in Serbia.

The invasion of *A. altissima* calls for new silvicultural approaches that should not only stop the invasion in the area, but also to reduce the presence of *A. altissima* in the stand structure to a more sustainable, non-invasive silvicultural system in the transitional period. In this respect, the knowledge about the elements of ecological adaptability of *A. altissima* to different habitats is important.

Some elements of ecological adaptability of *A. altissima* were analyzed on a habitat of Turkey oak and Oak of Virgil (*Quercetum cerridis-virgilianae* B. Jovanović & Vukićević, 1977.) on loess and marl bedrock in the lower hills of Fruška Gora mountain (Serbia) where *A. altissima* colonized young stands. The research was conducted in a stand 17 years old on two permanent sample plots on eastern aspect and slope of 15° that are located on different landforms — the first plot was on a foothill (130 m a.s.l.) that is on the border with pedunculate oak and European hornbeam forest (Ass. *Carpino betuli-Quercetum roboris* (Anić 59) Rauš 1971) and the second plot in the shoulder close to the summit (170 m a.s.l.) that is a typical habitat of Turkey oak and Oak of Virgil.

The mean and dominant heights and diameters of A. altissima differ between the plots in the foothill and the shoulder of the hillslope. This indicates to different ecological adaptability of A. altissima to this habitat.

Keywords: colonized stands; ecological adaptability; non-invasive silvicultural system; Tree-of-Heaven