

## Japanese Pepper, Japanese Prickly Ash

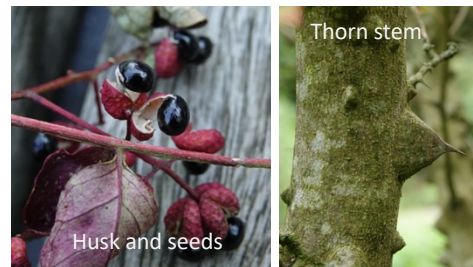
*Zanthoxylum piperitum* belongs to the rue family (Rutaceae), in which we also find all citrus species. The Szechuan pepper bush is not closely related to the well-known black pepper, *Piper nigrum* from the pepper family (Piperaceae; in the green house).



The plants in our garden were sown in 2011 and planted out in two locations in the garden. The natural distribution area is China, South Korea and Japan.

In China and Japan, the traditional spice bush was known long before black pepper. The dried and ground seed husks are mainly used. They are separated from the seeds and dried at 40 to 60 °C. The bitter and slightly toxic seeds are discarded.

Szechuan pepper is traditionally used for poultry, noodles and soup dishes (for example in many hotpot dishes) in Asian cuisine. It is part of the “5-spice blend”.



Apart from the seed husk, the leaves are also used. The powder (“sansho”) obtained from dried and crushed leaves is particularly popular in Japan due to its mild, citrus-like aroma. Ingredients such as terpenes, geraniol, linalool, cineole and citronellal are responsible for the uniquely fruity aroma of this type of pepper.



In addition to the Szechuan pepper, there are other peppers that are not closely related to the black pepper (*Piper nigrum*): the West African Guinea pepper (*Xylopia aethiopica* - family of the custard apple family Annonaceae) and the South American pepper tree (*Schinus molle* - family of the sumac family Anacardiaceae).

The South American pepper tree can be found nearby in the potted plant bed.