

Bougainvillea spectabilis

Nyctaginaceae

Eastern Brazil

Tg: Fyori

Ecology: A vigorous forest creeper from South America. Named after the French navigator Bougainville, it is one of the best-known ornamental plants of the tropics and subtropics. It will not flower where the night temperature is too low and requires well-drained soils, but is drought resistant. It loves warmth and thrives best in places exposed to full sun. In Eritrea, it was introduced by the Italians during the colonial period and is mainly cultivated as an ornamental in urban centres such as Asmara, Keren, Ghinda, Dekemhare and Mendefera, up to 2,400 m.

Uses: Ornamental, windbreak, live fence.

Description: A perennial climber, shrub or tree if not pruned, with **strongly hooked thorns beside leaves**. BARK: Grey-brown. LEAVES: Widely oval to about 10 cm, alternate on the stems, soft, smooth and shiny, darker above, tip pointed, narrowed at the base to a stalk about 1 cm; **colourful leaf-shaped bracts, about 5 cm long**. The bract bends away from the midrib which supports one small flower; **3 bracts together make the showy whorls** which may be very dense on the plant. FLOWERS: Narrowly tubular, about 2 cm, in 5 parts with 7-8 stamens within. FRUIT: The long thin ovary becomes a hard fruit but seeds are of little importance as vegetative reproduction is usual.

Propagation: Cuttings from mature plants. Plant in deep pits before rain for a good start.

Seed:
treatment:
storage:

Management: Pruning. Cut back all fleshy water shoots with attached bark to improve flowering. Bougainvillea can form hedges and completely cover walls of buildings, etc. As a climber it can cover large trees. It must be severely pruned to make a neat hedge. Many varieties have been developed for different colours and shape of the bracts.

Remarks:

