

Caesalpinia pulcherrima

Caesalpinioide

Tropical America, West Indies

- Common names: Eng: dwarf poindana, peacock flower, pride of Barbados
Swah: mnyonyore.
- Ecology: Native to tropical America, now widespread all over the tropics and frequently naturalized. It is planted as a ornamental and is common in gardens on the coast of East Africa. It tolerates most soils and grows well in all area below 1,200 m.
- Uses: Medicine (roots, flowers, leaves), ornamental, live **fence** ink from charred wood.
- Description: A shrub or small tree to 6 m, sometimes armed with a **few** short paired spines at nodes, or spines absent. **BARK:** grey, smooth, with or without pairs of short spines
LEAVES: pale green, **twice compound**, up to **10 pairs of side ribs**, each bearing 6-12 pairs of leaflets, a **lean** oblong to 2 cm, **tip** rounded or notched. **FLOWERS** brilliant scarlet, yellow or rose, edge frilly **and** yellow, in axillary or terminal heads over 30 cm long, each **flower** butterfly-shaped, about 3 cm across with **5 petals** and **10 red stamen filaments to 6 cm** with 5 standing well out of the flower. **FRUIT:** flattened, hanging pods, **irregularly** oblong, to 12 cm in length, turning dark brown, **twisting** open on the tree to set free small, flat seeds.
- Propagation: Direct sowing, seedlings.
- Seed info.: No. of seeds per kg: 4,400-5,500. Germination is good **and** uniform after 7-14 days; float off bad seeds (which are usually empty) in water.
- treatment: not necessary.
- storage: can be stored for up to six months.
- Management: Slow growing; coppicing.
- Remarks: A common shrub, normally erect but sometimes **spreading** and used as a hedge. Flowers, leaves and roots said in reduce fever. (In India the pods and leaves are used as a laxative.)

