

# *Delonix regia*

Fabaceae



## Madagascar

**Am:** *Dire Dawa zaf, Gorade*

**Eng:** *Flamboyant*

## Ecology

Now very rare in the wild of its native Madagascar, this deciduous tree is grown throughout the lowland tropics. Prefers sandy soil. Widely planted in Bereha and Dry and Moist Kolla agroclimatic zones, especially at Dire Dawa, 200–1,600 m.

## Uses

Bee forage, ornamental, shade, ornamental, avenue tree, beads (seeds).

## Description

A medium-sized deciduous tree with an umbrella crown, reaching a maximum 15 m. BARK: Grey, smooth. LEAVES: Compound, up to 45 cm long, light green and feathery, leaflets numerous, each less than 1 cm long. FLOWERS: Brilliant scarlet-red-orange in clusters, others appearing on the bare tree, each flower to 10 cm across with 5 petals, one cream and heavily spotted. FRUIT: Heavy flat pods to 75 cm long remaining many months on the tree. When dry they break open to release oblong seeds.

## Propagation

Seedlings (sow seeds in pots), direct sowing at site.

## Seed

Seeds prolifically. High germination rate. About 2,000 seed per kg.

**Treatment:** Immerse seed in boiling water for 5 minutes and allow to cool, or nick the seed coat.

**Storage:** Seed can be stored for long periods, as it is not damaged by insects.

## Management

Fast growing; pollarding. May grow well but take a long time to flower in cooler climates (>1,500 m), and when it finally does, flowering is poor.

## Remarks

A fast-growing species which has a shallow root system, making it unsuitable to grow near buildings. The dense canopy prevents its use for intercropping. It is a popular avenue tree.



Photo: Patrick Maundu

