

Delonix regia

Caesalpinioideae

Madagascar

English: Flamboyant**Ecology:** A strikingly beautiful tree in flower, almost extinct in its native Madagascar, now cultivated throughout the tropics 0–2,000 m. It is found all over Zambia as an avenue tree and ornamental. It prefers sandy soil and moderate rainfall, but survives dry conditions.**Uses:** Medicine (bark), bee forage, shade, **ornamental**, beads (seed).**Description:** A **spreading deciduous** tree, usually to 10 m with a flattened or umbrella-shaped crown. **BARK:** grey and smooth. **LEAVES:** light green, **feathery, compound** on a stalk to 60 cm, leaflets less than 1 cm, folding at dusk and falling in the dry season. **FLOWERS:** brilliant **scarlet-red clusters**, often appearing on the bare tree, each flower to 10 cm across with 5 petals. **FRUIT:** **heavy flat pods, to 75 cm** long, remaining many months on the tree. When dry, they break open to release oblong seeds, April–June.**Propagation:** Direct seeding, seedlings.**Seed:** Seeds prolifically; high germination rate. No. of seeds per kg: $\pm 2,000$.**treatment:** Immerse seed in hot water and allow to cool for 24 hours.**storage:** Seed can be stored for up to 4 years.**Management:** Coppicing.**Remarks:** The species has a shallow root system making it unsuitable for growing near buildings and this feature, together with the dense canopy, also prevents its use for intercropping. Fast growing.