

Senna spectabilis (*Cassia spectabilis*)

Caesalpinioideae

Tropical America

English: Golden cassia.**Ecology:** One of the exotic *Senna* species introduced into Zambia. This attractive tree needs a good rainfall and does best in moist sandy loam, 0–2,000 m. It also grows in the heavy clay soils around Mambwe boma.**Uses:** Firewood, charcoal, timber (tool handles), poles, bee forage, **shade**, **ornamental**, windbreak.**Description:** A semi-deciduous tree to 10 m with showy flowers. The bole is short, branching to give a rounded or flat crown. **BARK:** smooth grey, later rough. **LEAVES:** compound on a stalk to 40 cm, up to 15 **pairs leaflets**, each narrow with a **long pointed tip**. The stalks feel **softly hairy** as well as the underside of leaflets. **FLOWERS:** bright yellow heads which stand up cover the tree like golden “candles”, 30 cm or more high. **FRUIT:** pods, **almost cylindrical**, to 30 cm, turning from green to black. They open slowly to set free many seeds from individual sections, September–October.**Propagation:** Seedlings, direct seeding.**Seed:** Seeds profusely. No. of seeds per kg: 31,000–45,000.**treatment:** Immerse in hot water and allow to cool for 24 hours.**storage:** Seed can be stored for up to 2 years under cool, dry conditions.**Management:** Coppicing.**Remarks:** It is very common in Zambia; excellent shade when in leaf, so a popular avenue tree. Wood is termite-resistant. Easy to raise. Fast growing on good sites, slow on drier sites.