

# *Spathodea campanulata*

(*Spathodea nilotica*)

Bignoniaceae



## East, Central and West Africa

**Eng:** *African tulip tree, Flame of the forest, Nandy flame*

### Ecology

A decorative tree of forest fringe and a pioneer species, common from Uganda to West Africa, and widely planted throughout the tropics from 2,000 m down to sea level. Once established it is drought resistant. It does well in Dry and Moist Bereha and Dry, Moist and Wet Kolla and Weyna Dega agroclimatic zones.

### Uses

Firewood, charcoal, timber (carving), medicine (bark), ornamental, shade, mulch, windbreak.

### Description

A deciduous tree but bare many months, crown rounded, usually 10–15 m. BARK: Pale grey-brown and smooth, rough with age. LEAVES: Compound to 40 cm long, 6 pairs of leaflets, each wavy, tip pointed plus a central leaflet. Yellow-brown hairs on shoots, buds, branchlets and underside of leaves. FLOWERS: Fiery orange-red clusters stand out all over the tree, a yellow edge on the frilly petals; a yellow-flowering variety exists. Furry buds contain watery liquid. FRUIT: Brown woody capsules to 25 cm split on the ground releasing many flat winged seeds.

### Propagation

Seedlings, wildings.

### Seed

Collect the pods after they turn brown and leave them to air dry until they split open. Good seed germination rate. About 150,000 seed per kg. Seeds are light and care needs to be taken while watering and mulching seedbeds.

**Treatment:** Not necessary.

**Storage:** Seed does not store well; it should be sown fresh.

### Management

Fairly fast growing, pollarding. Coppicing on good sites but only when young.

### Remarks

Not browsed by domestic animals. A popular decorative tree for avenues.

