

# Spathodea campanulata (S. nilotica)

*Bignoniaceae*

Indigenous

Common names: **Eng:** African tulip tree, flame of the forest, Nandi flame; **Subi:** mugurube; **Swah:** kifabakazi.

Ecology: A decorative tree common at forest edges and in riverine forests in East, Central and West Africa. In Tanzania it is confined to the north-western districts of Buha, Kigoma, Biharamulo and Ngara. It does best in deep moist fertile soils in areas below 1,800 m. It is drought resistant once established.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, carving, medicine (bark), bee forage, shade, ornamental, mulch, windbreak.

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

Propagation: Seedlings, wildings, root suckers.

Seed **info.:** No. of seeds per kg: 160,000-200,000 with wings attached. Good seed germination rate.

**treatment:** not necessary.

storage: seed does not store well so should be sown fresh.

**Management:** Fast growing.

**Remarks:** One of the most beautiful of the indigenous trees with its large red flowers. It has been widely planted through: Tanzania. Flowers are produced 3-4 years after planting. The tree is not browsed by stock.

