

Tipuana tipu (Machaerium tipu)

Papilionoideae

Bolivia, Brazil

Common names: **Eng:** pride of Bolivia, tipu tree.

Ecology: An attractive flowering tree whose natural range is Brazil and the mountain forests of Bolivia. Now widely planted from the Mediterranean to the tropics. It is drought resistant, tolerating a wide variety of soils including black-cotton soils; in Tanzania 1,200-2,200 m.

Uses: Firewood, charcoal, timber, poles, fodder (leaves), bee forage, shade, ornamental.

Description: A large, spreading, semi-deciduous shade tree to 20 m, but occasionally to 30 m, with a light spreading crown. **BARK:** red-brown trunk, fissured and flaking with age, bark on the branches grey and cracked, sap from cut branches red and sticky. **LEAVES:** compound, **alternate leaflets** light green, each narrowly **oblong to 5 cm, tip round**, often notched, on a short stalk. **FLOWERS:** very many in long, **loose sprays**, each with **wavy yellow-orange petals**. **FRUIT:** unusual for legume family, the only genus with **single-seeded, flat-winged fruit**, yellow-green at first, looking like blossoms, later grey-brown, fibrous, staying on the tree for a long time.

Propagation: Seedlings, wildings, direct sowing.

Seed info.: No. of seeds per kg: 1,600-2,700. Germination rate 90% and over.

treatment: remove wings.

storage: at room temperature the seeds can be stored for up to three months.

Management: Fast growing; pollarding, lopping, coppicing.

Remarks: The tree is shallow rooted. It can produce useful poles.

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