



PLANT FACT SHEET

Bombax buonopozense P. Beauv.

GENUS *Bombax* FAMILY Malvaceae

COMMON NAMES Cotton tree, Red flower silk cotton tree

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Flowers, Seeds, Oil, Calyxes, Fruits

The fleshy calyxes are used in soups and sauces.

The young fruit are cut and dried then eaten in various meals.

The young leaves are dried and eaten as a potherb. They are also used in soup.

The oil from the seeds is used in cooking.

DESCRIPTION

A tree which loses its leaves during the year. It grows to 15-40 m tall and spreads to 3 m wide. The trunk is erect and stout. It is swollen in the middle and branches at the top. It has rough spiny bark. The leaves are divided like fingers on a hand. There are 5 bright green leaflets which are oblong and pointed towards the tip. The flowers are deep pink to red. They are 5 cm across. They are bell shaped and have 5 petals. They occur in crowded clusters near the ends of branches. The fruit is a ball shaped capsule.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It is native to C. and W. Africa. It does best in soils rich in humus. They need to be well drained. The plants should be in a protected sunny position. It is drought and frost tender. In Nigeria it has been recorded at 240 and 980 m above sea level.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

It is grown from seed.

NOTES

There are about 8-20 *Bombax* species.

Also put in the family Bombacaceae. In the subfamily Bombacoideae.

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