

## Flowering Trees



*Dillenia indica* L. of Dilleniaceae is an elegant, medium sized, tree of Indian origin (North-Eastern India). Its large white flowers, up to 20 centimetres in diameter, are very beautiful. They look somewhat like the flowers of *Magnolia grandiflora*. Full of nectar, the flower is generally seen with a number of large bees feasting inside. The foliage is dense with each leaf having a deeply fluted surface with close-set veins, each one ending in a marginal 'tooth'. The cricket-ball sized fruits mature slowly and detach from the tree only after the next flowering season. As a result, hundreds of fruits can be seen on the tree at all times. *Dillenia* is hardy and easy to cultivate. Linnaeus wrote "*Dillenia* has of all plants the showiest flower and fruit". Another authority calls it Nature's closest approximation to perfection in a flowering tree.