

Flowering Trees



Adenanthera pavonina L. (Coral tree) of Leguminosae is a medium-size tree with a spreading crown and compound leaves (picture shows a young specimen). Flowers are small, yellowish and arranged densely on an unbranched drooping inflorescence. Fruit is a curved hanging pod that turns brown as it matures, and splits open eventually. The two halves of the fruit wall coil up exposing beautiful shiny red seeds, which are more or less the same size and weight.

The tree is believed to fix nitrogen and thus helps rejuvenate soils. Young leaves are used as green manure and fodder. A decoction of leaves is used to treat gout and rheumatism. The attractive seeds are used as beads in jewellery, leis and rosaries. The ground seeds produce an oil that is used as industrial lubricant. Raw seeds are toxic and may cause intoxication. The hard reddish wood is used in carpentry for making cabinets. A red dye is obtained from the wood.