

NOTES ON FLOWERING TREES IN THE BOTANIC GARDENS, RABAU.

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The following notes comprise data on flowering trees only, but in subsequent issues it is proposed to publish notes on shrubs, creepers, &c.

These notes are based upon observations made in the Botanic Gardens, Rabaul, but it must be emphasized that the flowering periods are on a more or less sliding scale; seed is usually available approximately one month after the flowering.

Rabaul being in the tropical zone the seasonal changes are scarcely definable, being so slight as to be almost imperceptible. The heavy tropical rainfall has quite a different effect upon soil composition than in the more temperate zones where climatic conditions are conducive to strongly defined pollination periods.

The undermentioned trees are well worth planting, and, when at the flowering stage, will more than repay for the care and attention bestowed upon them.

When planting, care should be taken so that the trees selected will not dwarf the existing garden, otherwise the general design created may become unbalanced.

Alstonia scholaris (Apocynaceae).

A large tree of erect habit growing to a height of 100 ft. Small white flowers with strong perfume, which cover the foliage. Flowering period July to August. Propagation by seed.

Cassia bacillaris (Leguminosae).

The well known *Cassia* family contains some of the best flowering trees, *Cassia bacillaris* upholding the reputation. It grows to a height of 20 feet with yellow flowers, in pendulous racemes. Flowers almost continuously. Propagation by seed.

Cassia florida (Leguminosae).

This shapely tree grows to a height of 40 ft. with yellow flowers, and when in bloom makes a most attractive display. Flowers monthly. Propagation by seed.

Cassia fistula (Leguminosae).

Indian laburnum, growing to a height of 30 ft. with a profusion of bright yellow flowers. Blooms November, December, January and February. Propagation by seed, but seeds are very few.

Cassia grandis (Leguminosae).

South American species of *Cassia* with small pink flowers which completely cover the branches, and well worth planting. Flowers September, October and November. This tree grows to a height of 40 ft. and is propagated by seed.

Cassia multijuga (Leguminosae).

Fine feathery foliage and when in flower a most graceful tree with yellow flowers and growing to 30 ft. in height. Flowers September and October, but unfortunately has very few seeds for propagation.

Cassia nodosa (Leguminosae).

This tree is a magnificent sight when in full bloom with its pink and rose colouring. It grows to 40 ft. in height, flowers September, October and November, and is propagated by seed.

***Cassia stamea* (Leguminosae).**

Used in Rabaul as an avenue tree. Flowers are plentiful and yellow in colour, grows to 50 ft. and blooms almost continuously. Propagation by seed.

***Cassia sieberiana* (Leguminosae).**

Peach cassia. Undoubtedly one of the most beautiful of the flowering cassias, and when in bloom it is remarkably like a flowering peach. Grows to 40 ft. in height, the trees are deciduous and when new leaves form so does the bloom. Period of flowering October to January. Propagation by seed.

***Couropita guianensis* (Myrtaceae).**

Cannon ball tree. A striking tree bearing its racemes of large white and pink fleshy flowers. The brown round fruits attain a diameter of 10 inches and are extremely heavy. It flowers almost continuously and grows to a height of 100 ft. Propagation by seed.

***Cananga odorata* (Anonaceae).**

Known as Ilang-Ilang. The flowers are widely used by natives, strung on vines after the Hawaiian "leis" effect. Worth growing for the sweetly scented flowers. Grows into a shapely tree 100 ft. in height. Flowers almost continuously. Propagated by seed.

***Erythrina indica* (Leguminosae).**

Used as a shade tree on plantations. Grows to a height of 60 ft. and the bright red flowers are borne in clusters at the tips of the bare branches. Flowers October, November and December. Propagation by cuttings and seed.

***Erythrina lithosperma* (Leguminosae).**

"Dadap." Tree of struggling growth with large bright red flowers---needs occasional pruning. Flowers October, November, December, and January, and grows 60-80 ft. in height. Propagation by seed and cuttings.

***Eucalyptus naudiniana* (Leguminosae).**

Native name "Kamarare." Exceedingly quick growing tree with attractive foliage---grows 25 ft. in two years. Flowers are white and borne in clusters at tips of branches. Blooms December only. Propagation by seed.

***Eugonia malaccensis* (Myrtaceae).**

Malay apple. Grows to 30-50 ft. Produces a profusion of crimson flowers, the bright red stamens of which, when fallen, create an effect of a scarlet carpet under the trees. Flowers February, March, April, August, September, and October. Propagation by seed and marcots.

***Gliricidia maculata* (Leguminosae).**

Known as mother of cocoa and used as shade on many plantations. Grows to a height of 40 ft. The pink-mauve flowers are attractive but the trees do not produce many. Flowers August and September. Propagation by seed and cuttings.

***Klaineovia hospita* (Sterculiaceae).**

A large spreading tree with heart shaped leaves and roddish pink flowers which almost smother the foliage. Grows to a height of 50 ft. and flowers almost continuously. Propagation by seed.

Lagerstroemia flos reginae (Lythraceae).

Queen flower of India. One of the most showy trees in the tropics with mauve-pink flowers, and grows to a height of 40 ft. Flowers February, March and April. Propagation by seed.

Melia azedarach (Meliaceae).

The Persian lilac. Graceful foliage and small white scented flowers. Grows to a height of 60 ft., flowers every two months and is propagated by seed.

Monodora tenuifolia (Anonaceae).

Orchid flower tree. The flowers are mottled yellow and green on a brown background and strongly resemble orchids. Grows to a height of 25 ft. but rarely flowers.

Michelia champaca (Magnoliaceae).

A handsome tree which has been planted in Rabaul avenues with success. The flowers are yellow and profuse, but while blooming comparatively continuously are at their best about November. Tree grows to a height of 50 ft. and propagation is by seed.

Melaleuca leucadendron (Myrtaceae).

Ti tree of Australia. In the flowering period (August to December) the tree is covered with small white flowers and berries. It grows to a height of 20 ft. and is propagated by seed.

Peltophorum inerme (Leguminosae).

Quick growing tree of spreading habit with striking flower spikes of yellow flowers and brown berries. A splendid tree and suitable for shade in gardens—when in bloom presents a beautiful picture. Flowers every two months and is propagated by seed.

Poinciana regia (Leguminosae).

“Flame of the forest.” Also known as “Flamboyante.” One of the finest flowering trees of the tropics. Tree grows to a height of 50 ft. and has large bright red flowers. Blooms November to December and is propagated by seed and cuttings. Under some soil conditions the life of this tree is comparatively limited owing to root-fungus disease.

Pongamia glabra (Leguminosae).

Indian beech. Well shaped tree growing to a height of 30 ft. with small white flowers. Flowers November to January.

Solanum maeranthum (Solanaceae).

Potato tree. Fruit shaped like a potato. Blue flowers two inches in diameter. Frequently flowers and grows to a height of 40 ft. Propagation by seed.

Soraca indica (Leguminosae).

Asoka tree of India. A small spreading tree growing to a height of 30 ft. bearing on the stems and branches large clusters of scented flowers which change from yellow to orange. Seeds very rarely.

Spathodea campanulata (Bignoniaceae).

West African tulip. Flowers are bright red and large, covering the tree when in bloom. Grows to a height of 100 ft. and flowers almost continuously.

Propagation by seed. Although very decorative this species should not be planted close to buildings, owing to the brittle nature of the wood under high winds.

***Spathodea nilotica* (Bignoniaceae).**

Smaller than *S. campanulata*, but well worth planting. Grows to a height of 70 ft. but does not flower frequently. Propagation by seed.

***Amherstia nobilis*.**

The "peerless tree of the tropics" is often inquired for and although present in the Gardens, no data are as yet available on the flowering as the trees are still too young.
