

BAUHINIA VARIEGATA



Kingdom: Plantae

Phylum: Tracheophyta (vascular plants)

Class: Magnoliopsida (flowering plants)

Order: Fabales (bean order)

Family: Fabaceae (legume family)

Subfamily: Cercidoideae (redbud subfamily)

Genus: Bauhinia L.

Species: Bauhinia variegata

The Bauhinia variegata, also commonly known as the orchid tree or mountain ebony, is a species of flowering tree in the legume family, Fabaceae. It is native to an area from China through Southeast Asia to the Indian subcontinent.

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

This flowering tree is prized for its beautiful orchid-like blooms and interesting leaves.:

Habit: Small to medium-sized, deciduous tree reaching 10–12 meters (33–39 ft) tall

Leaves: Broad, lobed leaves that look like two large, rounded lobes at the base and apex

Flowers: Showy, fragrant, pink or white, orchid-shaped flowers, 8–12 centimetres (3.1–4.7 in) in diameter

Light: Prefers full sun to light shade

Soil: Well-draining soil

Water: Water moderately, allowing the soil to dry slightly between waterings. Avoid overwatering.

Temperature: Prefers warm climates, USDA hardiness zones 9B through 11. Protect from frost.

Fertilizer: Fertilize occasionally with a balanced fertilizer during the growing season.

USES

Landscape Tree: The most common use of *Bauhinia variegata* is as a landscape tree. Its beautiful orchid-like flowers, interesting leaves, and moderate size make it a popular choice for parks, gardens, and streetscapes.

Bonsai: Due to its ability to be trained and pruned, *Bauhinia variegata* can also be cultivated as a bonsai tree.

Food: In some regions, the flower buds and young leaves of *Bauhinia variegata* are consumed as a vegetable. It's important to note that consumption of some *Bauhinia* species can be harmful, so proper identification and guidance from a local expert is crucial before consuming any part of the plant.

Traditional Medicine: In some traditional medicine practices, various parts of *Bauhinia variegata* are used to treat a variety of ailments. However, there is limited scientific evidence to support these uses, and consulting a healthcare professional is recommended before using any part of the plant medicinally.

Wood: The wood of *Bauhinia variegata* is considered moderately hard and durable. While not a major source of timber, it can be used for local construction, tool handles, and firewood in some areas.