

# *Thespesia populneoides* (Roxb.) Kostel.

## Family:

Malvaceae

Kosteletzky, V.F. (1836) *Allgemeine Medicinisch-Pharmazeutische Flora* 5: 1861.

## Common name:

Tulip Tree; Indian Tulip Tree; Portia Tree; Pacific Rosewood

## Stem

Shrub or tree to 12 m.

## Leaves

Leaf blades truncate to shallowly cordate or cordate, about 5-17 x 4-14 cm. Midrib and usually four major and two minor lateral veins radiating from the point of attachment of the petiole. Twigs rather pithy and twig bark strong and fibrous when stripped.

## Flowers

Flowers large, solitary in the leaf axils, pedicels about 2.5-16 cm long. Epicalyx segments 3, falling very early in bud. Calyx +/- cupular with minute teeth, but spreading as the flower develops. Corolla large, about 6-7 cm long, mainly yellow (red towards the base) but turning pink or red throughout following anthesis. Stamens fused to form a central column, anthers horseshoe-shaped. Ovules 4 per locule.

## Fruit

Fruits depressed globular to broadly ovoid, about 25-45 mm diam. Fruit pedicels normally long and often hanging; outer fruit splitting into 5 segments, exposing inner fruit that is not dehiscent; seed with short clavate (club like) hairs.

## Seedlings

Seed germination time 11 days. Cotyledons transversely elliptic to broadly cuneate or obtriangular, about 17 x 29 mm, 5-veined, numerous dark red glands visible with a lens. At the tenth leaf stage: leaves cordate, apex acuminate, base truncate to shallowly cordate, leaf blade with a scattered reddish scales on the each surface; numerous oil glands visible with a lens; petiole, stem and terminal bud clothed in round or stellate reddish scales; stipules linear, about 2 mm long.

## Distribution and Ecology

Occurs in WA, NT, CYP and NEQ. Altitudinal range very small, at or slightly above sea level. Grows in beach forest, gallery forest (particularly on banks of tidal streams) and on beaches. Also occurs on Indian Ocean Islands, SE Asia and Malesia.

## Synonyms

*Hibiscus populneoides* Roxb., *Flora Indica; or descriptions of Indian Plants, by the late William Roxburgh Edn. 2, 3: 191-192* (1832), Lectotype: Wallich 1888.F. *Thespesia populnea* var. *populneoides* (Roxb.) Pierre, *Flora Forestiere de la Cochinchine* 11: t. 173 (1888). *Thespesia populnea* var. *bynoeana* Domin, *Bibliotheca Botanica* 22(89): 965 (1928), Type: "N.S. Wales: leg. BYNOE".

## RFK Code

1284



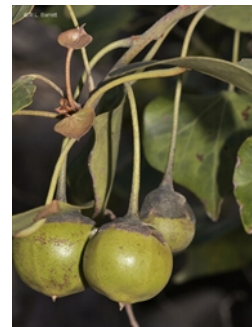
Flower. © R.L. Barrett



Flower. © R.L. Barrett



Leaves and flower. © R.L. Barrett



Fruit. © R.L. Barrett



Habit. © R.L. Barrett



Bark. © R.L. Barrett



Cotyledon stage, epigeal germination. © CSIRO



10th leaf stage. © CSIRO

