

The red cotton tree (*Bombax ceiba*) is a medium- to large-sized tropical tree that usually grows to an average of 20-25 meters, with old trees up to 60 meters in wet tropical weather. Its leaves are deciduous in winter. It produces a capsule which, when ripe, contains white fibres, like cotton, which has been used as a substitute for cotton (hence its common name). Crimson red flowers with five petals appear in the spring before the new foliage and are one reason that the tree is widely planted. It has a straight tall trunk buttressed at base that bears conical spines to deter animal attacks.