

# BRACHIYCTON ACERIFOLIUS



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*Brachychiton acerifolius* is a large tree in the Malvaceae family, native to the tropical and subtropical regions of the eastern coast of Australia. It is famous for its bright red, bell-shaped flowers, which often cover the entire tree when it is leafless. It is commonly known as flame tree, Illawarra flame tree, lace-bark tree, or (along with other members of the genus) kurrajong.



This species is a large deciduous tree that forms a pyramidal appearance. In its natural habitat, it can reach a height of 30 to 35 m. The resulting fruits are dark brown, leathery, boat-shaped, and approximately 10 cm in diameter. In Australia, they ripen between May and August.



## Cultivation and Uses

- *B. acerifolius* is very popular as an ornamental tree in its native Australia and around the world. Its flowering is a spectacular event, as the tree sheds its leaves just before producing clusters of bright red flowers across its entire body. It is used in street plantings, public parks and gardens, and private gardens. It is easy to grow and can be propagated from seed, cuttings, or grafting.



The seeds of *Brachychiton* species are edible; Australian Aboriginal people ate them raw or roasted after removing the irritating hairs from the bark. They are nutritious, containing 18% protein and 25% fat, and are high in zinc and magnesium. They also ate the roots of young trees.