

Australian Flame Tree, *Flame Kurrajong*

GENERAL

Origin	: sub-Mediterranean, Mediterranean, sub-tropical, tropical
Vigour	: slow-growing
Humidity	: semi-arid, semi-humid
Propagation	: sowing and pricking out
Maintenance	: moderate

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: vulnerable
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: medium
Salinity/ppm	: moderate (2000 ppm)
Hardiness	: -3°C

SHAPE

Type	: tree
Height	: 10 m-12 m
Spread	: 7 m-8 m
Foliage	: semi-evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: red
Size	: 2 cm - 3 cm
Period	: March - May

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: capsule
Fruit size	: 4 cm

Australian Flame Trees have maple-like, semi-evergreen foliage. Showy red flowers appear in spring when the branches are still bare. Like flames, the flowers attract the eye immediately. They are small but numerous, bell-shaped and grouped on branched, red stalks. They are worth waiting for, since trees do not bloom so spectacularly until they are 20 years old. Both flowering and durability of the leaves can vary from year to year, presumably depending on climatic conditions. The Australian Flame Tree is native to Queensland and New South Wales, where it grows to a height of about 36 metres. In Arriyadh, it usually does not exceed 12 metres high and about 8 metres across, where it requires shelter from hot, desiccating, strong winds. The straight trunk is covered in green bark that turns light grey with age. Young leaves emerge in pink and turn green as they mature. In late summer, boat-shaped fruits ripen and release edible, yellow seeds. Australian Flame Trees thrive in full sun and deep, fertile soil, which should be low in salt. The root zone should be soaked thoroughly every month during the summer. Drainage is important and some humus should be added, if the ground is alkaline. Phosphorus is important and irrigation should be stopped in winter to induce flowering. Popular in parks, it creates pleasant shade for pedestrians. Young plants should be protected from frost. Established trees simply shed their foliage in cold weather without any further damage. A central leader should be encouraged by removing lower branches.

