

What's That Blooming Thing ?

Erythrina 'Coral Tree'

Master Gardener Trainee Muriel King



E. Caffra 'Coastal Coral'
native to Southeastern Africa



E. lysistemom 'Lucky Bean Tree'
native to South Africa

- Average height between 33 to 50 ft, with canopy averaging between 25-50 ft
 - Fast grower with average life span of 25-50 years
 - Native to tropical and subtropical places

Flower, Leaf, Name, Many Species & LA Celebrity



Flower of *E. Caffra* 'Coastal Coral'
Native to Southeastern Africa



Flower of *E. lysistemmon* 'Lucky Bean Tree'
native to South Africa



E. Caffra leaves

- The flower is a dicot
- Floral formation unique for each species
- Trifoliate leaf; mostly deciduous
- Bright colored flowers, commonly red may be source of its genus name; means red
- Carl Thunberg, known as the father of South African Botany named the genus in 1770
- Genus is in the pea family of perennial flowering plants named Fabaceae. The genus has over 100 species of trees and shrubs
- Flowers are followed by bean pods with red seeds, but poisonous
- *E. Caffra* flower is national flower of Argentina & Uruguay; however native to Southeastern Africa. Common name 'Coastal Coral'
- *E. Caffra* official tree of Los Angeles



E. abyssinica 'Red-Hot Poker Tree'

Striking at Any Stage: In Bloom, Leafless or Not



E. Sanwicensis 'Sandwich Coral Tree'



E. Eggersil 'Cock's-spur'



E. Caffra 'Coastal Coral'
Dennis V. Allen Park



Leafless 'Coastal Coral'



Full leaf canopy

- SD Zoo has largest species collection in the US - 60
- A few common names: 'Brazilian Coral Tree', 'Immortelle Coral Tree', 'Red-Hot Poker'
- Dennis V. Allen Park, found 'Sandwich Coral Tree' @ Balboa Park
- A few endangered species, such as 'Cock's spur' – native to Puerto Rico & other tropical islands
- *E. x sykesii* is one of Australia's invasive weeds
- Majestic & beautiful even leafless

Other Facts



Flower of *E. Coralloides*
'Flame Coral Tree'



E. Sanwicensis 'Sandwich Coral Tree'.
Native to Hawaii.
One at Balboa Park & in full bloom



Leafless *E. Caffra* 'Coastal Coral'

- Some species have bumpy trunk/bark and some are thorny.
- Bark to treat wounds; infusion of leaves as drops for earaches & decoctions of roots for sprains
- Pollinators: birds and flying insects
- Seeds are poisonous, despite some cultures use to make jewelry
- Fix nitrogen, reason why coffee plantations grow them to provide for coffee crops.
- Pests are scales, mealy bugs, white flies & beetles
- Also affected by certain types of fungus that attack the vascular system

How to Grow & Take Care



- Propagated by seeds or cuttings
- Should check viability of seeds- floating method
- Easier by cuttings
- Always plant away from structures; fast growers & invasive roots
- Good drainage & full sun
- Water regularly, but once established and mature, water infrequently
- Limit growth spurts to avoid top heaviness w/ less water
- Trim after flowering & prune hard in winter to create balance and avoid toppling over
- Protect from pests & fungi & control w/proper irrigation methods & good drainage