

Bauhinia purpurea Linn.

Systematic Position

Kingdom: Plantae

Phylum: Tracheophyta

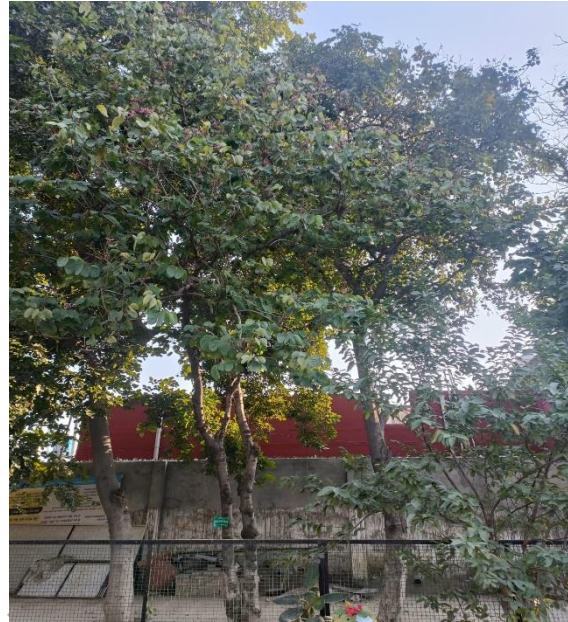
Class: Equisetopsida

Order: Fabales

Family: Fabaceae

Genus: *Bauhinia*

Species: *B. purpurea*



Popular names: Khairwal, Deva, Rakia kanchan, Kanchanam, Mandari, Sarul, Chuvanna-mandaram, Kaliar, Lal Kachnar, Kaniar, Koliar, Keelra, Sona, Karar, Karalli, Butterfly tree.

Nature: Tree

Flowering time: October to December

Fruiting time: January to April

Plant distribution: It is native of lower slopes of the Himalaya East of the Indus, upto about 1400 m. It extends eastwards to Assam and North East India and South through peninsular India as a scattered tree. Also found in Myanmar, Sri Lanka and South China.

Gardening notes:

1. **Light:** It grows well in part sun/shade.

2. **Moisture:** It requires less water and has high drought tolerance.

3. **Propagation:** By seeds.

Economic importance:

1. Roots are carminative.
2. Barks are used in diarrhea, also yields a fiber.
3. Flower buds are eaten as a pot-herb and also pickled; they are used as laxative and anthelmintic.
4. Leaves are used as fodder.
5. Wood is used for agricultural implements and matches; also suitable for rafters and scantlings.
6. The bark is used for tanning.
7. A dye and a fiber are obtained from its bark. 8. A decoction of the bark is recommended as a useful wash for ulcers.

Plant description: A fast growing evergreen tree reaching to a height of 30-35 feet;

Root- Tap root, branched; **Stem-** Aerial, erect, solid, woody, cylindrical, branched, bark- ashy grey, silvery, fairly smooth in young trees, becoming rougher and forming small, crusty plates as the tree grows older.

Leaf- Simple, alternate, butterfly shaped, reniform, notched, twin leaflets are partly joined in the middle with a deep cleft, the inner edges of the lobes on the top overlap slightly, young leaves are faintly downy, tips subacute or rounded, base cordate, nerves 9 to 11 radiating from the base, entire margins, slightly longer than broad, adaxial surface dark green, abaxial surface light green, prominent midrib and veins, petiolate, petiole- green, 4-5 cm long, pulvinus at base, stipulate, stipules- blunt, curved;

Inflorescence- Racemose

Flower- Large, showy, colored, zygomorphic, hermaphrodite, hypogynous, complete, pedicellate, pedicel- green, 3-4 cm long; Sepals- 5, gamosepalous, velvety outer surface, somewhat tubular, splitting on one side on into two, with 5 short teeth, inferior, fibrous outer surface, valvate aestivation; Petals- 5, polypetalous, purple, oblanceolate, one petal with centre dark purple veins, inferior, imbricate aestivation; Stamens- 3, free, two reduced to staminode, inferior, filaments light pink, slightly curved, 5-7 cm long, tubular, anthers light brown, bilobed, dorsifixed, longitudinal dehiscence; Carpel- 1, ovary superior, unilocular, marginal placentation, style long, hairy, stigma terminal, simple.

Fruit- Pod, thin, flattened, stalked, glaucous, 4-6 seeds, curved when dry and dehisced, 15-20 cm long, pointed at both ends, young pods green and often stippled with maroon, when ripe- the pod splits open with explosive force, ejecting seeds up to 6 m away; Seed- Exalbuminos, brown, thin.

Close up view of plants

Flora of KCA

