

## *Cassia fistula* Linn.

### Systematic Position

Kingdom: Plantae

Order: Fabales

Family: Fabaceae

Genus: *Cassia*

Species: *C. fistula*



**Popular names:** Amaltas, Girimalah,

Golden shower, Indian Laburnum, Sundali, Bahava, Garmala, Kakke.

**Nature:** Tree

**Flowering time:** April to June

**Fruiting time:** May to March

**Plant distribution:** It is native of India and grows widely all over the country up to about 4000 feet. Its natural range extends to Myanmar, China and the Philippines. It also grows well in almost all the tropical and sub-tropical areas of the world.

### Gardening notes:

1. **Light:** It grows well in full sun light.
2. **Water:** It can tolerate medium drought conditions and requires 75-190 cm of rainfall.
3. **Propagation:** By seeds.

### **Economic importance:**

1. Bark, known as Sumari, is used as a tan and yields a red dye.
2. Root-bark extract has been found to be satisfactory as a substitute for *Cassia beareana* Liquidum in the treatment of Black water fever.
3. The roots, bark, seeds, leaves and dark pulp of the fruit are used as a purgative and in lesser doses, are an effective laxative for constipation.
4. Poultices of the leaves are said to relieve chilblains, which are itchy painful sores on the hands and feet caused by extreme cold.
5. The timber is hard and long-lasting, and is used for agricultural tools, posts and carts.
6. The twigs and leaves are reported to heal ulcers.
7. It is widely cultivated because of beautiful drooping clusters of yellow flowers.

**Plant description:** A medium sized deciduous tree reaching to a height of 25-30 feet with a spreading irregular crown.

**Root-** Tap root, branched; **Stem-** Aerial, erect, woody, branched, solid, cylindrical, glabrous, bark- smooth and yellowish brown in younger trees, becoming dark grey and course in older trees with crusty plates that fall of like scabs.

**Leaf-** Compound, unipinnate, paripinnate, leaf blade 25-40 cm long, 15-20 cm wide, pulvinus at base, petiolate, petiole 6-7 cm long, stipulate, stipules-caducous, leaflets 4-8 pairs, opposite, ovate-oblong, 10-12 cm long, 8-10 cm wide, entire, acute, glabrous, adaxial surface dark green, abaxial surface light green, prominent midrib, leaves shed in April and renewed in May-June, unicostate reticulate venation, petiolulate, petiolule 0.5-1 cm long, green.

**Inflorescence-** Racemose.

**Flower-** Fragrant, bright yellow, hermaphrodite, actinomorphic, complete, hypogynous, pedicellate, pedicel 2.5-3 cm long, green, bracteate, bracts minute and caducous; Sepals- 5, polysepalous, yellowish green, inferior, quinquecostate, odd sepal anterior; Petals- 5, polypetalous, yellow, obovate, clawed, prominent veins on anterior surface, inferior, imbricate aestivation ; Stamens- 10, polyandrous, unequal in length, three longest stamens curled, three posterior stamens reduced to staminodes, filaments yellow, small, anthers brown, basifixed; Carpel- 1, monocarpellary, ovary superior, unilocular, marginal placentation, style short, curved, green, stigma simple, terminal, green, hairy.

**Fruit-** A legume, 25-30 cm long, 2.5 cm wide, cylindrical, smooth, green when immature, brown when mature, numerous seeds, seeds separated by thin transverse layers or septa; Seed- Brown, small, oval, 1 cm long, immersed in dark colour sweetish pulp.

#### Some close up pictures of Plant parts





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