

RAJASTHAN

State Flower: Rohida (Urdu).

Botanical Names: *Tecomella undulata* (Sm.) Seem.

Common Names: Desert Teak, Marwar Teak (English).

Family: Bignoniaceae.

Etymology: The generic name, **Tecomella** is ascribed to plants that have trumpet-



A tree in full bloom



Flower close-up

shaped flowers, and the specific epithet, **undulata** attributed to its leaves with wavy margins.

Description: Trees, to 7 m high with drooping branches and greyish brown bark; branches minutely stellate-hairy when young. Leaves simple, subopposite, narrowly oblong, cuneate at base, entire or undulate at margins, obtuse or emarginate at apex, 5 - 12 × 1 - 2.5 cm. Flowers in few-flowered corymbose-racemes, orange-yellow. Calyx campanulate, 8 - 9 mm long; lobes broadly ovate, obtuse, mucronate at apex, ca 3 mm long. Corolla campanulate, 5 - 7 cm long, subequally 5-lobed. Stamens

exserted; filaments glabrous. Stigma bilamellate, elliptic. Capsules linear-oblong, 15 – 35 × 8 – 10 mm, curved, smooth; seeds apically winged.

Flowering & Fruiting: January – April.

Range of Distribution: Drier parts of Arabia, southern Pakistan and North-western India (Gujarat, Haryana, Maharashtra, Punjab and Rajasthan); in Rajasthan, it is found in arid and semiarid districts, viz., Ajmer, Barmer, Bikaner, Churu, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Nagaur, Pali and Sikar.

Economic Importance: Wood is suitable for carving. It is an important timber-yielding plant of Rajasthan and commonly known as Marwar Teak or Desert Teak. It is chiefly used for furniture, tool-handles, boxes, well-curbs, cart-wheels, building items, huts and agricultural implements in the desert.

Traditional Uses: Timber is fairly used for making furniture, agricultural implements, carts, oil presses, bowls and drums. Saffron colour dye is said to be extracted from its flowers by traditional dyers. The bark is traditionally claimed in the treatment of various ailments, including obesity and cancer. Tribals inhale the vapour of crushed leaves to treat cough.

Medicinal Uses: The stem-bark is used as remedy for syphilis. It is also used in curing urinary disorders, spleen enlargements, gonorrhoea, leucoderma and liver diseases. The paste of old stem-bark with vegetable oil is applied over eczema. Seeds are used against sores and abscess.

Note: Over-exploitation and loss of habitats due to urbanization are the common threats for its depletion. It is propagated from seeds and cuttings.

Vinod Maina

Arid Zone Regional Centre, Botanical Survey of India, Jodhpur.