

PELTOPHORUM AFRICANUM Sond.

Family: Fabaceae

Common names: African wattle, weeping wattle, huilboom, isiKhaba-mkhombe, umSehle, umThoboMosehla, isiKhabakhombe, Nhlanhlanbu, Ndedeze, Mosathia, Musese,



Semi-deciduous to deciduous trees of about 15m with a spreading, untidy canopy. They grow best in well drained soil. In older trees the bark is grooved and grey-brown; bark of young branches is smooth and grey. The leaves are acacia-like and silver-grey covered with fine hair; mature leaves yellowish at tip of branches. The leaves are twice compound with a pair of leaflets at the tip; alternate; up to nine pairs of pinnae each with 10-20 pairs of leaflets; leaf, stalk and rachis covered with reddish brown hairs. The trees have no thorns.



Flowers form upright, showy sprays (150mm long) of bright yellow flowers with crinkled petals on the ends of branches; the stalk covered with reddish brown hairs. These are followed by clusters of thin, flat dark brown/black pods of about 100mm, tapering to both ends.

To propagate *Peltophorum africanum* place fresh seed in hot water and leave overnight. Sow in a 5:1 mix of river sand and compost. The trees are fast growing and drought resistant, but they are frost tender for the first three years.

Uses of *Peltophorum africanum*

This tree has many uses. Young leaves and pods are eaten by livestock. Flowers provide a high yield of nectar and pollen for bee-keeping. The timber can be used for furniture. The wood is good for fuel. It makes a good shade tree for both livestock and humans. There are also various medicinal uses recorded. Roots are used to heal wounds, toothache and throat sores; root, leaves and bark used to clear intestinal parasites and relieve stomach problems; bark relieves colic; stem and root used for diarrhoea and dysentery. It is also used to treat eyes.

2001

