



Leopard Tree

Can you spot the leopard on the Leopard Tree?

The Leopard Tree was given its common name because of its patchy dappled bark that looks very much like a leopard print, not because it is a leopard's habitat. Can you see it?



Uses

Its particular tonal qualities mean that the tree's timber is ideal for making fingerboards for electric basses and guitars.



It is also widely used in flooring, furniture manufacturing and to make gun grips.

Family: *Fabaceae*

Genus: *Libidibia*

Botanic name: *Libidibia ferrea* syn. *Caesalpinia ferrea*

Also known as: : Leopard Tree, Brazilian ironwood

Indigenous names: *pau ferro, morado*

Origin: Native to South America, specifically Brazil and Bolivia

Habitat: The Leopard Tree needs a wet, subtropical climate like eastern Brazil. Ideal Leopard Tree growing conditions include a sunny site, adequate irrigation and fertile soil.

Description: It's a slender, semi-deciduous tree with feathery foliage and an open crown with groups of small, thin leaflets.

The tree grows to 15m or even higher, but for those growing in moderate climates with a touch of frost, it generally stays smaller.

It has ornamental floral and autumn leaf displays.

With its panicle spikes (much-branched inflorescence) of sunny yellow flowers at the stem tips flowering in spring, it attracts birds, bees and butterflies.



Propagation and cultivation: The hard seedpods do not crack open when mature.

They can be opened by hitting with a hammer and scarifying the seeds and soak them in water.

They are then ready to go into the soil and will sprout within a few days. Although drought resistant they need plenty of water.

The wood from the Leopard Tree, however, can present as an instant allergen.

ID # 142



Sources:

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/trees/leopard-tree/leopard-tree-care.htm>

<https://brisbanetrees.com.au/leopard-tree/>
www.wikepaedia.org