



African tulip tree (*Spathodea campanulata*)

- Scientific name & Code:** *Spathodea campanulata* P. Beauv., **SPCA2**
Synonyms - *Spathodea nilotica* Seem.
- Family:** Bignoniaceae – Trumpet-creeper Family
- Duration/Growth Habit:** Perennial Tree
- Common names:** English – African tulip tree, fireball, fountain tree, flame of the forest
- Origin:** West Africa
- Description:** Large tree (up to 25 m) with stout, tapering trunk, branches marked with small white lenticels. Leaves pinnately compound, opposite (rarely 3/node), widely diverging to 50 cm long, 3-19 leaflets elliptic or ovate, entire up to 15 x 7.5 cm with 7-8 principal veins, puberulent and reddish brown beneath. Calyx a leathery sack filled with watery sap, in clusters, from which blooms a showy scarlet-orange flower, year-round (heaviest in winter-spring). Fruits clusters of upright, canoe-shaped capsules 17-25 x 3.5-7 cm. Seeds with membranous halos which aid in wind distribution.
- Propagation:** Prolific seed producer. Seeds dispersed by wind. Also propagates from root suckers and cuttings.
- Distribution:** Identified in Hawaii (Hawai'i, Kaua'i, Lana'i, Maui, Moloka'i O'ahu), Guam, CNMI (Tinian), American Samoa (Tutuila), Chuuk, Pohnpei, Yap, Marshall Islands (Ralik Chain), Palau (main island group).
- Habitat/Ecology:** Invades both abandoned agricultural lands, pastures, and forestlands. Relatively shade tolerant but requires nearly full light for rapid growth. Spreads rapidly in mesic to wet areas from sea level to 4000 feet elevation.
- Environmental impact:** Forms dense thickets and shades out other plants. Reduces species richness under its canopy. Trunks are easily broken in high winds and tends to drop large limbs when it becomes older.
- Management:** Physical – Hand pull or dig out seedlings and young plants.
Chemical – Sensitive to cut-surface applications of dicamba and glyphosate; saplings sensitive to basal bark applications of 2,4-D and triclopyr.
Biological – The potential for biological control has not been evaluated.

PIER Risk Assessment: High Risk, score: 14

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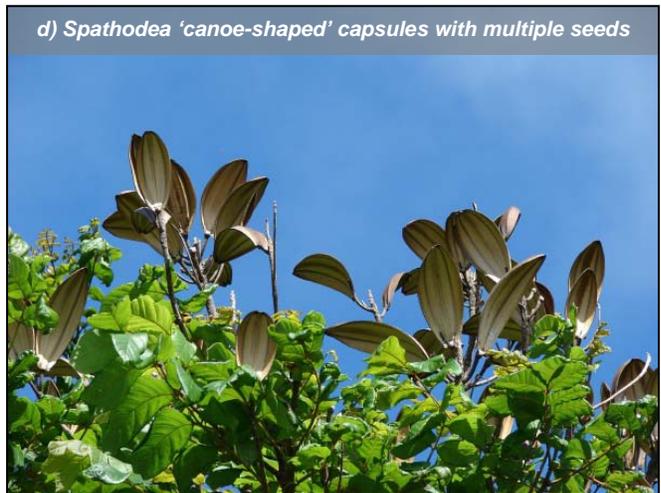
a) *Spathodea* flowers and leaves



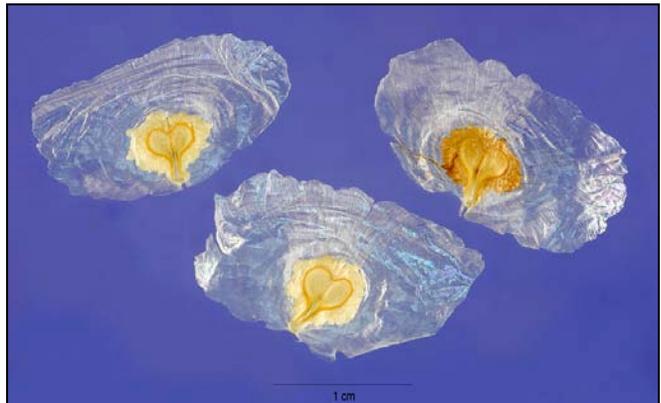
b) *Spathodea* tree crown with flowers



c) Smaller *Spathodea* tree



d) *Spathodea* 'canoe-shaped' capsules with multiple seeds



e) *Spathodea* seeds with membranous 'halos'

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