

Orchid tree/ Kachnaar

Botanical Name: *Bauhinia variegata*

Family: Fabaceae

Common Name: Kachnar

Hindi Name: कचनार

Part Used: leaves, flower buds, flowers, and young seedpods

Importance

Bauhinia variegata is a small to medium-sized tree growing to 15 metres (49 ft) tall and 50 centimetres (20 in) in diameter, deciduous in the dry season. The leaves are 15–20 centimetres (5.9–7.9 in) obcordate shaped, long and broad, rounded, and bilobed at the base and apex. The flowers are conspicuous, bright pink or white, 5–7 centimetres (2.0–2.8 in) diameter, with five petals. The history of the orchid tree, particularly *Bauhinia* species, is intertwined with its cultivation and cultural significance in Asia, with roots potentially dating back to ancient China and Japan. These trees have been valued for their ornamental beauty and medicinal properties, with species like *Bauhinia purpurea* and *Bauhinia variegata* being particularly popular. The genus *Bauhinia* was named by Linnaeus in honor of the Swiss botanists Johann and Caspar Bauhin. The Orchid tree, or *Bauhinia*, is significant for its diverse uses, including its ornamental value, culinary applications, and medicinal properties. Its bark and roots are used for dyeing and in traditional medicine, while the flower buds and leaves are edible and can be incorporated into various dishes. The tree also contributes to the aesthetic appeal of landscapes and gardens, and some species are known for their fast growth. Its bark, leaves, buds, flowers, and stem are utilized for treating ailments like gastrointestinal issues, skin diseases, respiratory problems, diabetes, inflammation, astringent, hard wood, leprosy, scrofula, ulcers, , abnormal menstruation, and even cancer.