

Canna indica

[Synonyms : *Canna achiras*, *Canna altensteinii*, *Canna amabilis*, *Canna ascendens*, *Canna aurantiaca*, *Canna aureovittata*, *Canna bidentata*, *Canna bifida*, *Canna brasiliensis*, *Canna carnea*, *Canna cearensis*, *Canna chinensis*, *Canna cinnabarina*, *Canna coccinea*, *Canna coccinea* var. *bicolor*, *Canna coccinea* var. *concolor*, *Canna coccinea* forma *flaviflora*, *Canna coccinea* var. *floribunda*, *Canna coccinea* var. *limbata*, *Canna commutata*, *Canna compacta*, *Canna concinna*, *Canna crocea*, *Canna densiflora*, *Canna densifolia*, *Canna denudata* var. *grandis*, *Canna discolor*, *Canna discolor* var. *rubripunctata*, *Canna discolor* var. *viridifolia*, *Canna edulis*, *Canna ehrenbergii*, *Canna ellipticifolia* var. *coccinea*, *Canna ellipticifolia* var. *lutea*, *Canna ellipticifolia* var. *patens*, *Canna ellipticifolia* var. *rubra*, *Canna esculenta*, *Canna exigua*, *Canna eximia*, *Canna flavescens*, *Canna floribunda*, *Canna formosa*, *Canna fuchsina*, *Canna fulgida*, *Canna heliconiifolia*, *Canna heliconiifolia* var. *xalapensis*, *Canna humilis*, *Canna indica* var. *coccinea*, *Canna indica* var. *edwardsii*, *Canna indica* var. *flava*, *Canna indica* var. *indica*, *Canna indica* var. *karsteniana*, *Canna indica* var. *limbata*, *Canna indica* var. *lutea*, *Canna indica* var. *maculata*, *Canna indica* var. *nepalensis*, *Canna indica* subsp. *orientalis*, *Canna indica* var. *patens*, *Canna indica* var. *rubra*, *Canna indica* forma *rubroaurantiaca*, *Canna indica* var. *sanctae-rosae*, *Canna indica* var. *variegata*, *Canna indica* var. *warszewiczii*, *Canna juncea*, *Canna laeta*, *Canna lagunensis*, *Canna lamberti*, *Canna lanuginosa*, *Canna leptochila*, *Canna limbata*, *Canna lutea*, *Canna lutea* var. *aurantiaca*, *Canna lutea* var. *maculata*, *Canna lutea* var. *pallida*, *Canna macrophylla*, *Canna maculata*, *Canna montana*, *Canna moritziana*, *Canna musifolia*, *Canna nepalensis*, *Canna occidentalis*, *Canna orientalis*, *Canna orientalis* var. *flava*, *Canna pallida*, *Canna pallida* var. *maculata*, *Canna patens*, *Canna patens* var. *limbata*, *Canna pentaphylla*, *Canna platyphylla*, *Canna plurituberosa*, *Canna poeppigii*, *Canna polyclada*, *Canna polymorpha*, *Canna portoricensis*, *Canna pruinosa*, *Canna pulchra*, *Canna recurvata*, *Canna rotundifolia*, *Canna rubra*, *Canna rubricaulis*, *Canna sanctae-rosae*, *Canna sanguinea*, *Canna saturate-rubra*, *Canna schubertii*, *Canna seleriana*, *Canna sellowi*, *Canna sellowii*, *Canna speciosa*, *Canna spectabilis*, *Canna surinamensis*, *Canna sylvestris*, *Canna tenuiflora*, *Canna texensis*, *Canna variabilis*, *Canna variegata*, *Canna variegatifolia*, *Canna ventricosa*, *Canna warszewiczii*, *Canna warszewiczii* var. *flameus*, *Canna xalapensis*, *Cannacorus indicus*, *Distemon brasiliensis*, *Xyphostylis lutea*]

INDIAN SHOT is a vigorous perennial. Native to the American tropics (particularly Brazil) it has pale pink to red flowers.

It is also known as *Aburobia* (Twi), *Achira* (South American Andes, Spanish), African arrowroot, *Albará* (Portuguese), *Araruta bastarda* (Portuguese), *Araruta de porco* (Portuguese), Arrowroot, *Bakalele* (Hausa, Nigerian), *Bakare kare* (Hausa, Nigerian), *Balisier* (French), *Balisier à chapelets* (French, West Indian), *Balisier comestible* (French), *Balisier des Indes* (French), *Balisier jaune* (West Indian), *Balisier rouge* (Creole, West Indian), *Bananeiras de Flor* (Portuguese), *Bananeirinha da India* (Portuguese), *Bandera de uriba* (Colombian, Spanish), *Birú manso* (Portuguese), *Butusarana* (Singhalese), *Café cimarron* (Panamanian, Spanish), *Calenda* (West Indian),

Caña comestible (Spanish), *Caña de la India* (Spanish), *Canas da India* (Portuguese), *Canna* (English, French, German), *Canna d'Inde* (French), *Canna florifère* (French), *Canna lily*, *Capacho* (Colombian, Spanish), *Chisgua* (Colombian, Spanish), *Chumbima* (Colombian, Spanish), *Conteiras* (Portuguese), *Cù dong giêng* (Vietnamese), *Dosna indická* (Czech), *Edible canna*, *English shot*, *Gaane sarvadaa* (Nepalese), *Ganjong* (Javanese, Sundanese), *Indian reed*, *Indisch bloemriet* (Dutch), *Indisches Blumenrohr* (German), *Kakuintásan* (Filipino/Tagalog), *Kana indická* (Slovak), *Kana indika* (Japanese), *Kanao manĝebla* (Esperanto), *Kanna* (Danish, Swedish), *Kanna indiiskaia* (Russian), *Maraca* (Spanish), *Mei ren jiao* (Chinese), *Mountain porridge*, *Platanillo* (Spanish), *Purple arrowroot*, *Queensland arrowroot*, *Sierra Leone arrowroot*, *Toloma food*, *Toloman* (French, West Indian), *Tous-les-mois* (French, West Indian), *Ubi gereda* (Malay), *Vailay-sembu* (Tamil), *Westindisches Blumenrohr* (German), and *Yuquilla* (Spanish).

Cultivated varieties can be found in many colours, including scarlet, orange or yellow or a mixture of them.

Indica means 'of or from India, or the East Indies or the Far East'.

The edible starch extracted from the roots is used in babies' and convalescents' diets, particularly in Australia, the West Indies and Hawaii. Locally the very young tubers are cooked and eaten.

The hard black seeds are used for making necklaces and Buddhists' rosaries – the Sinhalese name for Indian shot *butusarana* means 'help from Buddha'. In stark contrast the small seeds have also been used by African children as ammunition in their toy popguns and, as pellets in shooters, they were once used to kill small birds.

The leaves are used locally for wrapping food, and the South American U'wa Indians of Ecuador and Colombia (who, at the beginning of the 21st Century, may now be considered a branch of the Chibcha Indian group) have also used them for thatching, and for wrapping newborn babies. In addition for the U'wa the roots also form part of their staple diet.

The leaves and roots provide fodder for dairy cattle.

Apparently birds are drawn to the flowers in the dry season for the sweet nectar. Knowing this local children have placed the flowers in bird traps.

Medicinally, some African tribes have prescribed baths in the leaves mashed in water to ease fever, and some have claimed that the flowers have provided effective cures for various eye diseases. It is recommended in the West Indies for treating stomach-ache.