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*Euphorbia milii*

[Synonyms : *Euphorbia bojeri*, *Euphorbia breonii*, *Euphorbia splendens*, *Euphorbia splendens* var. *bojeri*, *Sterigmanthe bojeri*, *Sterigmanthe splendens*]

**CROWN OF THORNS** is a creeping spiny, semi-succulent shrub. Native to Madagascar it has coral red flowers surrounded by petal-like, bright red or yellow leaves (bracts).

It is also known as Christ plant, Christ thorn, Crown of thorns cactus, *Goutte de sang* (French), and *Pryšec zářivý* (Czech).

Warning – crown of thorns is potentially poisonous and its sap is an irritant. It can cause dermatitis.

*Miili* commemorates a Governor of Isle de Bourbon, Pierre Bernard Milius (1773-1829), where the species was grown. Milius was a member of the French Baudin Expedition to Australia of 1800-1804. When Nicolas Thomas Baudin (1754-1803) died from tuberculosis towards the end of the voyage, Milius took over the command of the Expedition which had eventually collected specimens of over 200,000 plants and animals, as well as charting a large part of the Australian coastline. Then from 1818-1821 Milius was Governor of Isle de Bourbon, an island east of Madagascar which reverted to a previous name Isle de Réunion in 1848 and remained a French colony until 1946 when she became a French administrative 'district'. In 1818 he was moved on to a similar post in French Guiana.