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*Hibiscus elatus*

[Synonyms : *Paritium elatum*]

**BLUE MAHOE** is a tree. Native to the West Indies (particularly Cuba and Jamaica) it has yellow turning to orange to reddish-brown flowers.

It is also known as Cuba bast, Mahoe, *Majagua* (Spanish), Mountain mahoe, and Tree hibiscus. The flowers are yellow early in the day and by nightfall when they drop they have changed through orange to reddish-brown.

*Elatus* means 'tall'.

Fibre has been extracted from the inner bark and put to local use – for instance for making rope. The wood has been made into gunstocks and fishing rods. In the past it has also been used for carriage poles, and today can still be chosen for cabinetwork.

Blue mahoe is a national flower of Jamaica.

Negro slaves used an infusion of the leaves and young shoots to treat dysentery.