

*Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*

[Synonyms : *Hibiscus chinensis*, *Hibiscus fulgens*, *Hibiscus sinensis*]

**CHINESE HIBISCUS** is an evergreen shrub or tree. Probably native to tropical Asia (particularly China) it has pink, orange, red, white or yellow flowers with prominent yellow stamens fused into one column.

It is also known as 'Aute (Samoan), Blacking plant, *Bunga-raya* (Malay), *Cardeais* (Portuguese), *Chaba* (Thai), China rose, Chinese shoe-flower, *Chinese roos* (Dutch), *Chinesischer Roseneibisch* (German), *Clavel japonés* (Spanish), Common garden hibiscus, *Da hong hua* (Chinese), *Dasanam* (Telugu), *Fusou* (Japanese), Garden hibiscus, *Gumaméla* (Filipino/Tagalog), *Haibisukasu* (Japanese), Hawaiian hibiscus, *Hawaii blomst* (Danish), *Hibisco* (Canary Islands, Portuguese), *Hibiscos* (Portuguese), Hibiscus (English, French, German), *Hibiscus de Chine* (French), *Hibiscus de los jardines* (Spanish), *Hibiscus rose de Chine* (French), *Hibiskus* (Swedish), *Ibišek čínská růže* (Czech), *Japaa kusum* (Nepalese), *Jasud* (Gujarati), *Jasum* (Hindi), *Joba* (Bengali, Sanskrit), *Kaute* (Tongan), *Kembang wera* (Sundanese), *Ketmia róza-chinska* (Polish), *Ketmie rose de Chine* (French), *Kiinanruusu* (Finnish), *Kinaros* (Swedish), *Kinesisk rose* (Danish), *Mahot à fleurs* (French), *Mimo-chinês* (Brazilian, Portuguese), *Mimo de Vênus* (Brazilian, Portuguese), *Palo de la reina* (Panamanian, Spanish), *Papo* (Panamanian, Spanish), *Pejo* (Colombian, Spanish), Red hibiscus, *Rosa da China* (Portuguese), *Rosa de China* (Spanish), *Rosa della Cina* (Italian), *Rose de Chine* (French), Rose of China, Rose-of-Sharon, *Sapatthu-mal* (Singhalese), *Saputtupu* (Tamil), *Senitoa* (Fijian), Shoe-black, Shoe-blackening plant, Shoe-flower, Shoe plant, Shoe tree, *Shoublak* (Creole), *Tapo* (Panamanian, Spanish), Tropical hibiscus, *Woro-wari* (Javanese), and *Zhu jin* (Chinese).

The flowers last for 1 day. Humming birds drink their nectar.

The bark yields fibre.

*Rosa-sinensis* is derived from Latin *rosa* (rose) and *sinensis* (of or from China) components meaning 'Chinese rose (*Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*)'.

Locally the flowers are often used as a hair adornment, and in contrast, when they fall at the end of the day, a black shoe or hair dye is obtained from them. Apparently married Chinese ladies have used these flowers to stain their teeth black, and this dye is still used now to colour eyebrows, and hair. In Hawaii the flowers are included the leis (the flower necklaces) with which visitors are warmly greeted.

Chinese hibiscus is the national flower of Malaysia.

For Hindus the flowers are sacred to Ganesha, the elephant god, also known as Vighneshvara ('Lord of Obstacles') and they play a role in religious ceremonies.

Pickled flowers are eaten raw, and the fresh flowers are also used for colouring many different foods, including preserves and cooked vegetables. Further they provide a colouring for toddy.

In some places Chinese hibiscus is used for hedging.

Medicinally, in Malaysia a decoction of roots is used as an eye-wash, and a treatment for fever and some venereal disease – and a decoction of the leaves is also used for treating fever.

In India the flowers provide an ingredient for a cough syrup and a remedy for some kidney disorders, while in Asia generally the bark is used to treat period problems.

